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THE ARYAN PATH

Canst thou destroy divine Compassion? Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of Laws—eternal Harmony, Alaya's Self; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal. The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its Being, the more thy soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become Compassion Absolute. Such is the Arya Path, Path of the Buddhas of perfection.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

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INDEX

General Index

Algonquian Ceremonialism and Natural Resources of the Great Lakes—*By Gertrude P. Kurath* 136
Avanindranath Tagore's Concept of Art—*By Sudhir Kumar Nandi* 26

Bear With Us—*By A. R. Williams* 364
Blake, William—Born 28th November 1757: Died 12th July 1827—
I—William Blake—A Radiant Man—*By R. L. Mégroz* 484
II—In Our Era of Chaos—William Blake Points the Way —*By V. de S. Pinto* 488
III—William Blake and Spiritual Democracy—*By Victor Rienaecker* 496
Buddha and Shankara (Quotation)—*By H. P. Blavatsky* 196
Building the New India—*By "A Student of Theosophy"*—
I—Towards Ameliorating the Condition of the Poor 339
II—Democratic Approach, The 402
III—New Minds for New Tasks 444
IV—Role of Social Service, The 500

Caste, Untouchability and India's Secular State—*By "C.V.H."* 387
Chinese Way, The—*By R. M. Fox* 64
Civilization on Trial—*By V. V. Bhatt* 105
Conrad, Joseph: 1857-1924—A Reconsideration—*By R. L. Mégroz* 532
Convivial Ascetic, The—*By Alexander F. Skutch* 302
Creation Dances—*By George Godwin* 202

Delusions of the West—*By Peter de Morny* 120
"Dhammapada," The—*By V. Raghavan* 58
Dreams That Come True—*By Roy Lee Sherman* 218

*East and West—Two Provocative Volumes
I—*By S. Vahiduddin* 179
II—*By P. T. Raju* 180

Finchden Manor—An Interview with the Master of Finchden—*By Geoffrey Brown* 208
First Burmese-English Dictionary, The—Published in India in 1826 —*By E. Pauline Quigly* 151

Gandhian Ideals in the India of Today—*By N. B. Parulekar* 435
Generation of Power, The—*By Peter de Morny* 407
Gentle Interpretation of Economic Forces, The—*By L. Delgado* 4
Gilbert Murray—*By Derek Stanford* 440
Gratitude—*By "Pilgrim"* 255
Great Latin-American Poet, A: Gabriela Mistral—*By Mireya Lara-Carrasco and Lila Ray* 263

Human Factor in the Crisis of Our Times, The—*By V. V. Bhatt* 162

*Review-articles. The books upon which they are based are listed in the usual alphabetical order in the Index of Book Reviews.

Humanity and the Criminal—*By Derrick Sington* 10

In Praise of Substantial Inequalities of Income—*By L. Delgado* 157
Indian Culture in Indonesia—*By H. I. S. Kanwar* 15
Indian Institute of World Culture, The 136, 327, 467
Intuition in Indian Philosophy—*By D. Gurumurti* 213

Key Terms of Sanskrit Literary Criticism Reconsidered, The—*By K. Krishnamoorthy* 116
*Krishna the Beloved—*By A. A. Bake* 561

William Law—A Disciple of Boehme—*By Peter Malekin* 358
Leaves from a Paris Diary—*By Baldoon Dhingra* 284, 325, 379, 425, 472, 523, 571
Letter from London, A—*By Sunder Kabadi* 186, 281, 423, 569

*Maker of History, A—*By Roy Walker* 271
Medicine's Own Neurosis—*By Roy Bridger* 244
Modern German Literature—A Bird's-Eye View 166
Monument on the Aryan Path, A—*By A. Iswaran* 197
Murry, John Middleton—Pseudo-Mysticism and Modern Science (Reprint) 223
Mystic (Poem)—*By Herbert Bluen* 524

Nature and Man—Problems of Co-existence—*By Roy Bridger* 383
Need For Propaganda Analysis, The—*By Reginald Reynolds* 449
*Neglect of Myths and Prophets—*By Leonard M. Schiff* 125
New Kind of Awareness, A—*By Carl Christian Jensen*
I. 505
II. 539
New Order in India, The—*By Ralph Richard Keithan* 149
"No Fighting . . . No Fun!"—*By Elizabeth Cross* 170
"No Skill Needed. . ."—*By Elizabeth Cross* 68

*One Source, One Goal—*By Roy Walker* 32

*Personal Testament, A—*By Kenneth Walker* 228
Philosophy of McTaggart, The: With Special Reference to the Doctrine of Reincarnation—*By A. C. Ewing* 51
Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal, The—*By S. Vahiduddin* 546
Pilgrim of Eternity, The—*By "Pilgrim"* 455
Poems of Marie Gerny-Marchal, The—*By Andrée Karpelès and Adalrik Högman* 174
Poetry, Propaganda and Censorship—*By Peter Malekin* 557
*Problems of Buddhist History—*By Edward Conze* 318
Protestant Mysticism—*By Sidney Spencer* 111

*Realm of the Psyche, The—*By W. E. Whiteman* 367
*Religion Which Believes in the Happiness of All—*By V. R. Trivedi* 177
Religious Approach of John Middleton Murry, The—*By Derek Stanford* 353
*Rich Store of Wisdom," "A—*By H. J. J. Winter* 227
Rise of the Oratorio, The—*By Irene Gass* 258

Role of the Story-teller in the Modern World, The—*By Manjeri S. Isvaran* 535

Sarvodaya and Gram-Raj—*By Ralph Richard Keithan* 307
Science and World Peace—*By S. L. Bhatia* 327
Shakespeare's Works Among the Yugoslavs 72
Silent Revolution in Tunisia—*By Reginald Reynolds* 345
Slavery—*By C. W. W. Greenidge* 397
Sleeping on Horseback (Poem)—*By Po Chu-I* 222
Some Pacifist Pioneering in America—*By Reginald Reynolds* 21
State and the Individual, The—A Cautionary Tale—*By L. Delgado* 467
Study of English in India, The—*By A. M. Ghose* 553
Symbol of the Tree in Mythology, The—*By John Stewart Collis* 291

"Thus Have I Heard"—*By Shravaka*:
We are the Trustees of Our Possessions 1
Politicians Need Philosophy 49
Of Repentance 97
Sin of Speech, The 145
When the Pupil is Ready the Master Appears 193
Living Epic, A 241
Cedars of Lebanon," "The 289
Our Real Friends 337
Conquest of the Great Disease," "The 385
Moral Principles in the International World 433
Fighting-cocks and the Turkey, The 481
Voice of the "Zeitgeist," The 529
Tragedy and Comedy—A Western View—*By Peter Malekin* 100

Vedic Outlook and Its Relevance Today, The—*By K. Guru Dutt* 296
Vicarious Living—*By J. C. Kumarappa* 349

West Indians in Britain—*By Kenneth L. Little* 250
*World Culture and the Written Word—*By E. M. H.* 313

Index of Book Reviews

Acharya Srivijayavallabhasuri Smarak Grantha (Acharya Srivijayavallabhasuri Memorial Volume)—*Edited by Bhogilal J. Sandesara, Umakant P. Shah and Nagakumar N. Makati* (Gujarati Section); *Prithviraj Jain* (Hindi Section); *Motichandra, Jagadishchandra Jain and C. J. Shah* (English Section) 177
African Jungle Doctor—*By Warner Junge* 234
Age of Enlightenment, The—*By Isaiah Berlin* 89
Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism 519
Alfred Adler: An Introduction to His Psychology—*By Lewis Way* 87

All That Jesus Began: An Account of the Church of the New Testament—*By R. H. Copestake* 85
Alphabetics as a Science—*By Walter C. Durfee* 417
Analysis of Dreams, The—*By Medard Boss; trs. by Arthur J. Pomerans* 461
Anthology of Japanese Literature from the Earliest Era to the Mid-nineteenth Century—*Compiled and edited by Donald Keene* 35
Apastambasrautasutra with Dhurtasvamibhasya—*Edited by A. Chinnasvami Sastri* 41
Art of Loving, The—*By Erich Fromm* 371
Art of Meditation, The—*By Joel S. Goldsmith* 517
Asoka's Edicts—*By Amulyachandra Sen* 233
Ayurvedic Treatment of Cancer—*By Prabhakar Chatterji* 183

Balance of Truth, The—*By Katib Chelebi; trs. by G. L. Lewis* 566
Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with F. Mary Barr 466
Beggar Princess, The: A Historical Drama in Five Acts—*By Dilip Kumar Roy and Indira Devi* 128
Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology—*By Jean-Paul Sartre; trs. by Hazel E. Barnes* 512
Bertrand Russell: The Passionate Sceptic—*By Alan Wood* 465
Bharatiya Kavita 1953 567
Body's Imperfection, The: The Collected Poems of L. A. G. Strong 375
Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards 1955: A Compilation of Original Poetry Published in Magazines of the English-speaking World in 1954. Seventh Annual Issue 79
Buddha, the Prophet and the Christ, The—*By F. H. Hilliard* 83
Buddha's Explanation of the Universe, The—*By C. P. Ranasinghe* 566
Buddhism in Kashmir and Ladakh—*By J. N. Ganhar and P. N. Ganhar* 377
Buddhist Sculptures and Monuments 514

Calendar of Tiahuanaco, The: A Disquisition on the Time Measuring System of the Oldest Civilization in the World—*By H. S. Bellamy and P. Allan* 77
Character and Conduct—*By Mukulbhai Kalarthi; trs. by Gurdial Mallik* 323
Character of Man, The—*By Emmanuel Mounier* 228
Church in Soviet Russia, The—*By Matthew Spinka* 421
Commentaries on Living: From the Notebooks of J. Krishnamurti—*Edited by D. Rajagopal* 178
Communism and Christianity—*By Martin D'Arcy* 232
Confucius—*By Shigeki Kaizuka; trs. by Geoffrey Bownas* 84
Contemporary British Philosophy: Personal Statements. Third Series—*Edited by H. D. Lewis* 92
Contemporary Indian Literature: A Symposium 418
Craft of Letters in England, The: A Symposium—*Edited By John Lehmann* 38
Cruelty to and Neglect of Children: Report of a Joint Committee of the British Medical Association and the Magistrates' Association 42
Cultural Heritage of India, The: Vol. IV: The Religions—*Edited*

by Haridas Bhattacharya 272

Dattatreya: The Way and the Goal—*By His Highness Sri Jaya Chamarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur* 415
Deeper Secrets of Human History in the Light of the Gospel of St. Matthew—*By Rudolf Steiner* 517
Destiny of the Mind, The: East and West—*By William S. Haas* 180
Dialogues with the Guru—*By R. Krishnaswami Aiyar* 185
Drug-Taker's Notes, A—*By R. H. Ward* 367

East and West: Some Reflections —*By S. Radhakrishnan* 32
Education and the Philosophic Mind—*Edited by A. V. Judges* 519
Education in New India—*By Humayun Kabir* 321
Elements of Early Buddhist Psychology, The—*By S. K. Ramachandra Rao* 416
Ephraim of Israel: The Unknown Apostle—*By Paul Constant* 420
Ethical Value—*By George F. Hourani* 82

Feed Him With Apricocks—*By Dennis Gray Stoll* 277
Fourth Way, The: A Record of Talks and Answers to Questions Based on the Teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff—*By P. D. Ouspensky* 412
Freedom from Fear—*By Lester L. Coleman* 78
Freud and Religious Belief—*By H. L. Philip* 43

God the Unknown—*By Victor White* 232
Gods and Heroes of the Greeks—*By H. J. Rose* 522
Gospel and the Religions, The: A Biblical Enquiry—*By Walter Freytag* 464
Gospel of Uncle Tom's Cabin, The—*By F. W. Boreham* 127
Gothic Flame, The: Being a History of the Gothic Novel in England: Its Origins, Efflorescence, Disintegration and Residuary Influences—*By Devendra P. Varma* 419
Gurjararasavali—*Edited by B. K. Thakore, M. D. Desai and M. C. Modi* 323

Historian's Approach to Religion, An: Based on Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh in the years 1952 and 1953—*By Arnold Toynbee* 271
History of Buddhism in Ceylon: The Anuradhapura Period—*By Walpola Rahula* 275
History of the University of Bombay, A: 1857-1957—*By S. R. Dongerkery* 460
History of Western Literature, A—*By S. M. Cohen* 375
Human Hand, The: The Living Symbol. A Study of the Hand in Relation to Human Conduct and Living, with an Explanation of the Processes to be Employed in its Interpretation —*By Noel Jaquin* 130
Hypnosis and Its Therapeutic Applications—*Edited by Roy M. Dorcus* 88
Hypnotism and Crime—*By Heinz E. Hammerschlag* 322

Idiom of Contemporary Thought, The—*By Crawford Knox* 379
In the Last Analysis—*By Adam Elliott Armstrong* 378

India's Culture and Her Problems —*By P. T. Raju* 132
Indian Christians of St. Thomas, The: An Account of the Ancient Syrian Church of Malabar—*By L. W. Brown* 231
Indian Heritage, The: An Anthology of Sanskrit Literature—*Selected and translated by V. Raghavan* 227
Indian Mutiny, The: A Centenary History—*By Richard Hilton* 461
Indian Writers at Chidambaram—*Edited by Hilla Vakeel* 521
Interplay of East and West, The: Elements of Contrast and Co-operation—*By Barbara Ward* 564
Introduction to the French Poets, An: Villon to the Present Day —*By Geoffrey Brereton* 37
Introduction to the Spiritual Life, An—*By H. Reginald Buckler* 515

Jesus in Rome: A Historical Conjecture—*By Robert Graves and Joshua Podro* 463

Kantian Thing-in-Itself, Or the Creative Mind, The—*By Oscar W. Miller* 42
Knights, The—*By Aristophanes; trs. by Gilbert Murray* 34

Layman's Bhagavad-Gita, A: Vol. II—*By A. S. P. Ayyar* 133
L. H. Myers: A Critical Study—*By G. H. Bantock* 181
Life of Robert Southwell, The: Poet and Martyr—*By Christopher Devlin* 79
Light of Asia, The—*By Edwin Arnold* 514
Lokamanya Tilak: Father of Indian Unrest and Maker of Modern India—*By D. V. Tahmankar* 131
Loves of Krishna, The: In Indian Painting and Poetry—*By W. G. Archer* 561

Making, Knowing and Judging: An Inaugural Lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 11 June 1956—*By W. H. Auden* 127
Making of the Sermon, The—*By Robert J. McCracken* 518
Martin Luther: Saint and Sinner—*By Theodore J. Kleinhans* 81
Medusa's Mirror: Studies in German Literature—*By August Closs* 567
Methods of Mental Prayer—*By Cardinal Lercaro* 324
Minos or Minotaur: The Dilemma of Political Power—*By John Bowle* 91
More Poems—*By Sri Aurobindo* 419
"My Dear Child": Letters from M. K. Gandhi to Esther Faering 132
Myths and Legends of China—*By E. T. C. Werner* 376

Naked They Pray—*By Pearce Gervis* 234
Nature of Man According to the Vedanta, The—*By John Levy* 274
Natyasastra of Bharatamuni with the Commentary Abhinavabharati by Abhinavaguptacarya. Chapters 1-7, Vol. I—*Edited by M. Ramakrishna Kavi and K. S. Ramaswami Sastri* 377
Nawa-i-Waqt—*By Nizamuddin S. Gorekar* 323
Nayadyumanih—*By Meghanadarisuri; edited by V. Krishnamacharya and T. Viraraghavacharya* 183
Neti-Neti (Not This. Not That). —*By L. C. Beckett* 130

New Look at Marx, A—*By Philip Spratt* 462
New Worlds Beyond the Atom—*By Langston Day in collaboration with George de la Warr* 90
Njál's Saga—*Trs. from old Icelandic by Carl F. Bayerschmidt and Lee M. Hollander* 374
Nurslings of Immortality—*By Raynor C. Johnson* 521

On the Nature of Man: An Essay in Primitive Philosophy—*By Dagobert D. Runes* 230
Outline of Hindiusm—*By T. M. P. Mahadevan* 279

Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa—*By George Padmore* 86
Personality: In the Light of Western and Indian Psychologies—*By Sita Ram Jayaswal* 370
Personality of India, The—*By Bendapudi Subbarao* 422
Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria, The—*By E. F. Osborn* 420
Philosophy of Jnanadeva, The—*By B. P. Bahirat* 413
Piece of My Mind, A: Reflections at Sixty—*By Edmund Wilson* 372
Places of Buddhist Interest 514
Poet's Way of Knowledge, The—*By C. Day Lewis* 372
Poetry of Living Japan, The: An Anthology with an Introduction—*By Takamichi Ninomiya and D. J. Enright* 564
Pollen Path, The: A Collection of Navajo Myths—*Retold by Margaret Schevill Link; with a Psychological Commentary by Joseph L. Henderson* 129
Portraits from Memory and Other Essays—*By Bertrand Russell* 90
Power of the Mind, The: The System of Creative Realism—*By Rolf Alexander* 87
Preface to Empathy—*By David A. Stewart* 230
Preksanakatrayi—*By V. Raghavan* 520
Primer of Necessary Belief, A—*By Dawson Jackson* 516
Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting—*By Rudolph Bultmann; trs. by R. H. Fuller* 231
Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of G. I. Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky. Vol. V.—*By Maurice Nicoll* 88

Quest for Healing, The—*By Godfrey Winn* 235
Quest of the Divine, The—*By Alexander F. Skutch* 83

Race Relations in World Perspective: Papers Read at the Conference on Race Relations in World Perspective, Honolulu 1954—*Edited by Andrew W. Lind* 280
Rainer Maria Rilke: Creative Anguish of a Modern Poet—*By W. L. Graff* 513
Ramayana of Valmiki, The: Vol. II. Aranya Kanda, Kishkindha Kanda, Sundara Kanda—*Trs. by Hari Prasad Shastri* 413
Realm of the Incas—*By Victor W. von Hagen* 465
Reason and Existenz: Five Lectures by Karl Jaspers—*Trs. by William Earle* 85
Reginald Mainwaring Hewitt (1887-1948): A Selection from His Literary Remains—*Edited by Vivian de Sola Pinto* 82

Reincarnation in the Gathas, the Holy Bible and the Holy Koran —*By H. S. Spencer* 562
Religion Can Help the World. A Symposium including Contributions from Rishiram, Israel Mattuck, Miresse Gunaseri Maha Thero, Floyd Ross, Dr. H. Ghoraba and Reginald Sorensen—*Edited by Arthur Peacock* 278
Remember the House—*By Santha Rama Rau* 128
Revelation and Reason in Islam—*By A. J. Arberry* 514
Russian Poetry: 1917-1955—*Selected and trs. by Jack Lindsay* 373

Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry—*By Owen Barfield* 516
Science and Civilisation in China. Vol. II: History of Scientific Thought—*By Joseph Needham; with the research assistance of Wang Ling* 78
Scientific Humanism and Christian Thought—*By D. Dubarle*; *trs. by Reginald Trevett* 133
Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Studies Towards Their Solution —*By Hugh J. Schonfield* 235
Sensism: The Philosophy of the West. Vols. I and II—*By Charles Smith* 179
Sexuality, Love and Immortality—*By John P. Grip* 568
Siddhartha: Man of Peace (A Drama)—*By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya* 280
Some Observations on Libraries, Manuscripts and Books of Burma from 3rd Century A.D. to 1886 (With Special Reference to the Royal Library of the Last Kings of Burma)—*By E. P. Quigly* 416
Songs and Sonets of John Donne, The—*Edited by Theodore Redpath* 39
Songs of Chandidasa—*Translated by Samir Kanta Gupta* 416
Source Book in Indian Philosophy, A: *Edited by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore* 463
Sribhasyaprakasika—*By Srinivasacarya; edited by T. Chandrasekharan* 41
State in the New Testament, The —*By Oscar Cullmann* 420
Status of Man in the Universe, The —*By Albert Van Eyken* 185
Story of Indian Culture, A—*By Bahadur Mal* 273
Stray Petals—*By O. T. Menon* 371
Studies in Indian Literary History. Vol. III—*By P. K. Gode* 184
Survey of Buddhism, A—*By Bhikshu Sangharakshita* 318

Tantrarahasya: A Primer of Prabhakara Mimamsa—*By Ramanujacharya; edited by R. Shama Shastry and K. S. Ramaswami Sastri* 40
Technique of Conscious Evolution, The: Incorporating Self and Superman—*By L. E. Eeman* 89
Testament of a Liberal—*By Albert Guerard* 44
Thinking About Thinking—*By Merl Ruskin Wolfard* 129
Three Great Irishmen: Shaw, Yeats, Joyce—*By Arland Ussher* 568
Tibetan Book of the Dead, The, or The After-death Experiences on the *Bardo* plane, according to Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering—*By W. Y. Evans-Wentz; with a Psychological Commentary by C. G. Jung* 565

Tragic Philosopher, The: A Study of Friedrich Nietzsche—*By F. A. Lea* 563
Travels of Fa-hsien (399-414 A.D.), or Record of the Buddhistic Kingdoms—*Re-translated by H. A. Giles* 233
Treasury of World Literature—*Edited by Dagobert D. Runes* 276
Tree of Dreams, The—*By Marius Barbeau* 80
2500 Years of Buddhism—*Edited by P. V. Bapat* 514

Unity in Shakespearian Tragedy: The Interplay of Theme and Character—*By Brents Stirling* 126
Upanishadic Stories and Their Significance—*By Swami Tattwananda* 377

Vedarthasamgraha of Sri Ramanujacarya—*Translated by S. S. Raghavachar* 274
Vividh Vyakhyano (Several Lectures). Vol. III—*By Balvantrai K. Thakore* 278

West Indian Folk Tales: Anansi Stories: Tales from West Indian Folklore—*Retold by Lucille Iremonger* 36
What They Believe: A Survey of Religious Faith Among Groups of College Students—*By G. Edwin Covington* 279
Will and the Way, The: A Study of Divine Providence and Vocation—*By Harry Blamires* 466
Wisdom of the Torah, The—*Edited by Dagobert Runes* 125

Yoga: Uniting East and West—*By Selvarajan Yesudian and Elisabeth Haich; trs. by John P. Robertson* 33
Yuan Mei: Eighteenth Century Chinese Poet—*By Arthur Waley* 276

Index of Correspondence

Heaven and Hell—*By C. D. Broad* 45
Inter-Religious Communion—*By Nette Bossert* 134

Index of Notes

Activity Which Unites 439
"Africa South"—*By S. K. D.* 135
Amateur Drama—*By W. W.* 573

Baraka 448
Behind the Iron Curtain 63
Buddhism in Germany—*By R. J.* 262

Children of the New Race 312
Classless Society, The—*By R. J.* 173
Culture and Personality—*By E. M. H.* 295
Disease of Our Age, A 454

English in Indian Education 156

Felloship 348
Fine Compilation, A—*By W.* 57

Gandhiji versus Lenin 483

India and the Arabs—*By R. J.* 207
India and the English Language 552

International Character of Law, The 249

Lunatic System, A 366

Medical Profession, The 76

One Currency 474
Our Constitution—*By I. W. B.* 71

Pocket Books 357
Poetic Function of Religion," "The —*By D. G.* 148
Preaching and Practising 212
Problem of Democracy, A—*By S. K. D.* 226

Restoration Comedy, The—*By G. M.* 176
Revival of Buddha Dharma—*By S. R.* 306

Satyagraha in World Affairs 427
Status of Teachers, The 110

Tagore's Educational Philosophy —*By R. J.* 285
To See Ourselves—*By R. J.* 161
Towards World History 344

Vinoba's Lead Back to "Inwardness" 556

Welcome Innovation, A 124
Welfare State, The 499
World Citizenship 504

Index of "Ends and Sayings" Paragraphs

African Renaissance, The 479
All-India Religious Conference's Working Committee in Delhi—Dr. Rajendra Prasad's address to 381
Automation—Oliver Humphreys on 192

Basic Education 287
British Commonwealth—Professor Toynbee on, at the Indian Institute of World Culture 142

Centenary Convocation Address to the Calcutta University by Dr. Radhakrishnan 141
Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference—James Cameron on 428
Convocation Addresses by C. Rajagopalachari and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar 93
Convocation Address to the Madras University by P. V. Rajamannar 476

"Could Machines be made to Think?"—A. D. Ritchie on 190
Crime in America 191
"Culture and Tomorrow's Child" —James Hemming on, at the London Branch of the Indian Institute of World Culture 94

Early Hindu Marriages 334
Education in India—Urban and Rural 430

False Prophets 333
Fascist Ideology 478
Forests and erosion—Mira Behn on 525
Foundations of Peace, The 333

Gandhi Marg—a new quarterly 189
Gandhian Outlook and Gandhian Method 334

Gandhism—Dr. Arnold Toynbee on 189
Glaring Advertisements—C. Rajagopalachari and Morarji Desai on 383
Guilty Parents—Jerome D. Frank, M.D., on 382

Hindi Shiksha Samiti at New Delhi 431
"Holy Men," an All-India Register of 428
Hypnotism 382

Importance of Libraries—B. S. Kesavan on 287
Inaugural Address to the Forty-Fourth Science Congress by Prime Minister Nehru 141
Inauguration of National Council of Economic Research in New Delhi 95
Inauguration of the Thirty-first Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress 96
Independence Day Address at the Indian Institute of World Culture by B. Vaikunta Baliga 476
International Humanist and Ethical Union Congress 432
International P. E. N. Congress, XXIXth session of 475

Judaism and Vedanta—Rabbi Asher Block on similarity between 144

Keats-Shelley Memorial Association 239
Kher, Shri B. G., death of 190

Lecomte du Nouy, Mrs., at the Indian Institute of World Culture 191
Liberal Education According to Carnegie Foundation Pamphlet 143
Library of the Indian Institute of World Culture declared open by H. H. the Governor of Mysore 574
Limitations of Psychoanalysis," "The 286

Marriage, children and standard of living 527
Moral Capital—Lester L. Colbert on 191

National Book Trust 477
Nature of Genius—Dr. Ernest Jones on 288
Nuclear weapons, ominous possibilities of 526

Out of Evil Cometh Good—Hungary and Russia 93

Panchasila in Politics and Buddhism 384
Panchasila, political and of the Buddha 47
Patients and Doctors—By Kenneth Walker 528
Plea for Scholarly Compassion," "A—By Orlo Strunk 240
President Rajendra Prasad's Address at the Kurukshetra University 142
Problem of beggary in India—N. G. Goray on 576
Prostitution, real causes and cure of 526

Remedy for the World's Plight," "The—Esme Wynne-Tyson on 429
Report on the Soviet Union in 1956 143
Review of Educational Progress in India During 1956-57 429
Road Accidents and Alcohol 478

Sadhus and Reform—Mira Behn on 381
"Salvage of Liberalism"—Sir Norman Angell on 336

Sardar Patel Memorial Lectures for 1956 95
"Satellitis"—J. B. Priestley on 575
Sir Mirza Ismail's Advice to Muslims 48
"Some Types of Creative Thinking"—Dr. Arthur E. Morgan on 475
Spirit of Africa," "The 237
Suicides 336
"Swelling Frustration"—C. Rajagopalachari on 238

Technology and self-control—Prime Minister Nehru's Gandhian views on 575
Ten Rural Institutes 430
Threat of Bombs—An Old Proposal by Erich Wunderli of Zurich 238
Tranquillizers 479

Unesco International Conference, Ninth Session 48
U.N.O. and international problems—Prime Minister Nehru and President Rajendra Prasad on 574
U.N.O. and its Secretary General Mr. Hammarskjoeld 47
Universal Franchise 237
Unrest of Abundance," "The—Wilfred Wellock on 190

Vegetarianism 335
Vice in Britain, Wolfenden Committee's Report on 525
Victors are Vanquished," "The 477

Writer and State patronage, The 334

Index of Names and Pseudonyms of Writers of Articles, Reviews, Notes and Correspondence

A. R. 230
Abse, Dannie 79
Allegro, J. M. 235
Allen, E. L. 224, 420, 421

B. 133
Bake, A. A. 561
Bangaruswami, R. 89, 91, 185, 521
Bennett, A. A. G. 83, 233
Bernard, C. M. 127
Bhatia, S. L. 327
Bhatt, V. V. 105, 162
Bluen, Herbert 524
Bossert, Nette 134
Bradbury, Parnell 277
Bridger, Roy 244, 393, 462
Broad, C. D. 45
Broker, Gulabdas 278
Brown, Geoffrey 208

C. B. 36
"C. V. H." 387
Chari, C. T. K. 235, 379
Chhabra, B. Ch. 416
Closs, A. 513
Collis, John Stewart 291
Conze, Edward 318
Cranston, Maurice 85
Croft, Phyllis G. 87, 88
Cross, Elizabeth 68, 81, 170, 519

D. G. 148
Damle, P. R. 413
Davies, C. Collin 92, 521
De Morny, Peter 43, 120, 371, 407
Delgado, L. 4, 157, 467
Dhingra, Baldoon 284, 325, 379, 425, 472, 523, 571
Dutt, K. Guru 296, 463

E. M. H. 295, 313
E. P. T. 466, 568
E. W. 33, 130, 234, 278
Ewing, A. C. 51

Fausset, Hugh I'A. 370
Fox, R. M. 64
Franklin, T. Bedford 90

G. M. 176
Gass, Irene 258
Ghose, A. M. 553
Giles, Lionel 84, 276
Gode, P. K. 41, 183, 377
Godwin, George 80, 202, 466
Gokak, V. K. 418
Gransden, K. W. 39
Greacen, Robert 372, 375
Greenidge, C. W. W. 397
Gurumurti, D. 42, 213, 230

Hewlett, Dorothy 37, 126, 372
Hogan, J. P. 82, 90, 373, 516, 517
Högman, Adalrik 174
Högman, Andrée Karpelès 174
Horner, I. B. 566
Hough, E. M. 567
Houghton, Claude 128

I. W. B. 71
Isvaran, Manjeri S. 535
Iswaran, A 197
Iyengar, K. R. Srinivasa 181, 276

J. 562
J. V. 323
Jayaswal, Sita Ram 129, 567
Jensen, Carl Christian 505, 539

Kabadi, Sunder 44, 86, 186, 281, 415, 423, 461, 569
Kanwar, H. I. S. 15
Kashyap, Mohan 564
Keithan, Ralph Richard 149, 307
Kenworthy, F. 515
Kothawala, Roshan 128, 280, 377, 465
Krishnamoorthy, K. 40, 116, 183, 274
Kumarappa, J. C. 349
Kurath, Gertrude Prokosch 136

Lara-Carrasco, Mireya 263
Lauwerys, J. A. 321
Lee, E. G. 85, 133, 231, 463, 464, 516, 517, 518
Little, Kenneth L. 250
Loewe, Michael 376
Low, A. M. 77, 78

Malekin, Peter 100, 358, 557
McCracken, D. J. 512
Mégroz, R. L. 461, 484, 532
Melluish, T. W. 34

Nandi, Sudhir Kumar 26
Narahari, H. G. 41, 323, 520
Nicholson, Norman 127
Nikam, N. A. 280
Norman, Sylva 38, 79

Parulekar, N. B. 435
"Pilgrim" 255, 455
Pinto, V. de S. 488
Po Chu-I 222
Pusalker, A. D. 184, 272

Quigly, Pauline E. 131, 151

R. J. 161, 173, 207, 233, 262, 285, 377
Raghavan, V. 58
Raju, P. T. 180
Rao, P. Nagaraja 279
Rao, S. K. Ramachandra 87, 275
Ray, Irene R. 185, 232, 279, 378, 420, 568
Ray, Lila 263
Reynolds, Reginald 21, 345, 449
Rienaecker, Victor 496

S. K. D. 135, 226

S. R. 306
Salzberger-Writtenberg, L. S. 563
Sangharakshita, Bhikshu 514
Sarwari, A. Q. 323
Sastri, A. Venkappa 83, 234, 460
Schiff, Leonard M. 125, 231, 232, 375
Sen, Dilip Kumar 371, 416, 417, 419
Shah, P. G. 422
Sherman, Roy Lee 218
Shravaka 1, 49, 97, 145, 193 241, 289, 337, 385, 433, 481, 529
Singh, Iqbal 416
Sington, Derrick 10
Skutch, Alexander F. 302
Smith, F. Seymour 35, 564
Spencer, Sidney 111
Stanford, Derek 353, 440
Stewart, J. I. M. 419
Stoll, Dennis Gray 522
Stoverud, Torbjorn 374
Student of Theosophy," "A 339, 402, 444, 500
Trivedi, V. R. 177

Vahiduddin, S. 179, 546
Vakeel, Hilla C. 132, 273

W. 57
W. E. W. 42, 89, 178, 322, 565
W. W. 573
Walker, Kenneth 78, 88, 228, 274, 412, 519
Walker, Roy 32, 271, 465
Ward, A. Marcus 420
Ward, R. H. 82
Watt, W. Montgomery 514
Whiteman, W. E. 367
Williams, A. R. 364
Winter, H. J. J. 227, 566
Winyard, C. A. 129

Z. 130
Zutshi, B. 413

THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

VOL. XXVIII DECEMBER 1957 No. 12

"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—
THE VOICE OF THE "ZEITGEIST"

Just before the close of the nineteenth century the concepts which made science materialistic received what should have proved to be their deathblow. The discovery of radium and of kindred facts and forces unknown to an earlier generation compelled physicists and chemists, and therefore also physiologists and biologists, to abandon their notions about atoms and ether, about organic and inorganic forms of life.

By 1950 it was evident that the civilized world had failed to read the message of the closing decade of the last century. The discovery of radiation and of other recondite scientific knowledge was put to the use and service of violence, selfishness and pride born of ambition and avarice.

The end of the Second World War left the soul of the world suffering the abject poverty of falsely motivated knowledge. Hiroshima and Nagasaki thundered proclamation of the moral bankruptcy of political leaders and of the many men of science who had allowed themselves to be exploited by the politicians. From Leningrad to Los Angeles and from China to Peru every nation was attacked by the disease of violence.

The story of the failure of our so-called civilization continues even now, but the stirrings of a greater power than that which political kings can wield or scientific genii use are steadily growing stronger. That power is the Still, Small Voice of Deity which has begun to articulate the Divine Intuition in the Heart of Man.

The Influence of the Eternal Now is working in the ever passing present, but its meaning and message are missed by the majority of our civilized people. The Influence of that Eternal Now focuses on a person here, in an event there, *e.g.*, Gandhiji's personal life speaks not of past, present and future but of that Eternal Now—the manifested aspect of the Absolute Boundless

Duration which is named in the Zoroastrian scriptures as *Zervane Akarne*. Similarly, in the mistaken action which destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there thunders forth the truth of eternity. The former, Gandhiji's soul life, is a bright and noble expression of Immortal Love; Hiroshima, the dark and ignoble expression of immortal hate. Light and Darkness, the *Gita* teaches, are the world's eternal ways. The Divine Presence of Ahura-Mazda is there in the action of the Good Spirit, Spenta-Mainyu, as also in that of the Evil, Angra-Mainyu. These two Ahura-Mazda calls "My Spirits."

The spirits primeval are a pair and they together communed. These two differ in thought, in word, in deed, one the enhancer of betterment, the other the fashioner of evil....The two spirits came together at the dawn—one the maker of life, the other to mar it, and thus they shall be unto the last. (*Yasna* XXX. 3, 4)

I announce to you life's first two spirits of whom the Good accosted the Evil: Never our thoughts, nor creeds, nor understandings, nor beliefs, nor words, nor deeds, nor consciences, nor souls can be the same. (*Yasna* XLV. 2)

There are unmistakable signs of the Good Spirit of the Most High Ahura-Mazda working in the mind-*manas* and the intellect-*buddhi* of the race. We have before us a remarkable volume which in itself is a good sign of our times—*Winds of Hiroshima* by Ralph Tyler Flewelling. The author is a great-hearted philosopher whose fine work has energized many to a better understanding of the nature of man and his evolution, and has brought to them a deeper insight to enable them to live by enlightened faith and not by blind belief. He is the Diogenes of the twentieth century and, as Editor of the quarterly *Personalist*, has served well the cause of culture and of universal brotherhood. *Winds of Hiroshima* (Bookman Associates, New York) should be in the hands of every publicist and every lover of his fellow men. Its author points to the enemies of modern civilization; what he says about creedal church Christianity is no less applicable to every other creed—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam, etc.:—

...the elements in Christianity which indicate its aptness as a universal religion, a cosmic faith, must supersede the narrow, bigoted, and unyielding fanaticism which has to a startling degree nullified the plain teachings of the Man of Nazareth. The time is overdue for the reign of the spirit of truth in the hearts of Christians to take the place of trust in the great lie. The age of the Holy Spirit, which is to lead into all truth is at the doorstep of the world, that or destruction. Nothing can bind men together but a Gospel of Love.

But something other than creedal religion stands in the way of true progress:—

Not only are we hindered by barriers set in the way of common sympathy among men of varying faiths who yet

believe in the existence of Deity, but the situation is further complicated by the appearance of a widely disseminated "religion of irreligion," now, for the first time in history setting itself up to capture the world as a political movement. Professing democracy, it would destroy the very roots of democracy. It rests upon the exploitation of persons by forcing all to a slavery to the state, only substituting slavery to a bureaucracy for its former enslavement to the Tsar. In the name of freedom, freedom is denied. For the sake of persons, personality is smothered.

To fight these two enemies, the leaders of which are dictators, we need more men and women in whom the Divine Intuition stirs. In every normal intelligence the Sense of Immortality and Divine Selfhood works. It stresses love of Spirit and its Power of Unity in manifestation and therefore the solidarity of men or universal brotherhood. Says our esteemed author:—

Forces are coming into play which violence cannot overcome. These forces lie in the realm of the mental and spiritual, too often held in contempt. These powers do not act, however, apart from the active cooperation of man. The victory will not be to him who can only outrun the excesses of the violent, but to him who, while strong in physical power, resists the temptation to abuse it, and meets such an enemy at the level of his greatest weakness, that of spiritual values.

The propagation of this truth of unfolding the love which casteth out fear and hatred is the highest duty that truly religious men have to perform towards those who are imprisoned by sacerdotalism, materialism and superstition.

There must be new inquiry *ab initio* concerning the reality of religion, as revolutionary and as searching as the scientific investigations of the day, not so much for the disclosure of old errors as to provide an intelligible vernacular of discourse for a new age. Religion must be viewed from the standpoint of spiritual reality, rather than from religious dialectic, and judged by the fruits of the spirit which it produces. This judgment must be applied to all efforts after the understanding of God, in all systems, with an outlook so broad as to resemble the Divine mercy; as wide as the sea of the Eternal Love. There is no thirty-eighth parallel for the Divine solicitude. For the new age, what any sincere man anywhere has learned of goodness, beauty, and truth in the meaning of life, is a matter of prime importance.

The volume has a special message for Indians. Gandhiji, paid lip-tribute by millions as the Father of the Nation, has not yet received the reverence of their hearts; very few have the reverence to worship the Ideal which his life embodied; millions of us have still to prove ourselves worthy of kinship with him. Worship by lips will hinder—it has already begun to do so—but worship by a contrite, humble and truthful heart will help not only the worshipper but also his neighbours the world over.

SHRAVAKA

JOSEPH CONRAD: 1857–1924

A RECONSIDERATION

[Joseph Conrad was born a century ago in December and his many admirers in all parts of the world are celebrating his hundredth birth anniversary. **Mr. R. L. Megroz** has been a careful student and a discriminating critic of Conrad, with whom he had a long conversation in 1922.—Ed.]

It is unlikely that anybody who met Joseph Conrad has forgotten him, although since his death in England in 1924 his work has passed through a posthumous period of neglect. I say "passed through" with some misgiving, for the impression one gets from publishers generally remains a pessimistic one. Yet the volume of critical comment, at least in Britain and probably in the United States, has once more swollen into a continuous stream of almost automatic eulogy. Probably the most original and suggestive book since the last war has been one entitled *The Mirror of Conrad,* by Mr. E. H. Visiak, published by T. Werner Laurie, Ltd., London, two years ago.

The truth is that most of the comment on Conrad nowadays adds very little to what has been already written, and it is Conrad's praise of and devotion to English principles and policies which most readily provoke approval. One does not hear much of the equally sincere touches of Conradian irony—sometimes even sarcasm—aroused by perceiving the less amiable aspects of those who carry abroad what used to be called "the White Man's burden" and their Governments' policies.

With the passage of time, and two world wars, Conrad's humane but usually conventional attitude to "coloured" peoples is more noticeable owing to a change of outlook. The self-deceived White, who was convinced that he had a duty to rule other peoples for their own good, at his most amiable, preferred to think of them as children. There are many indications of Conrad's rather complicated attitude, but on the whole it condemns the White oppressors. After all, Conrad had come from a Russian-ruled province of Poland, where his father and family had incurred exile for taking part in an ineffectual revolution. Conrad knew the meaning of oppression, though a few generations later both Russia and Germany could have shown him the full possibilities of tyranny. It was the background atmosphere in his country, then divided under the rule of other Powers, which encouraged Conrad, after his father's death, to leave his childhood and family behind and become a sailor, using his knowledge of French and making first for Marseilles.

It is not difficult to show that Conrad sometimes revealed an enlightened attitude that was rather ahead of the time of his writing. Yet among other mistaken notions about

Conrad I recall how, since the last world war, so intelligent a critic as the late George Orwell, in the new-found sensitiveness of the time, carelessly assumed that the "nigger" in the most beautifully written of Conrad's tales, *The Nigger of the Narcissus,* must have been someone who was insubordinate to him on a ship. But the work-dodging, treacherous, thieving, grumbling ex-guttersnipe from London, Donkin, is the "nigger's" worst enemy and about the unpleasantest of all the varied characters presented in Conrad's fiction. If Conrad sides at all, it is with the Negro sailor whose half-suspect illness constantly alarms the crew and rouses resentment when all hands are needed in sailing the ship. For he is presented as the freak, the stranger, the intelligent alien in that company of crude Whites; one who all too soon evokes the complaint about "damned foreigners" from the Donkin type. It is unfortunate that Conrad was not content to let the ignorant seamen speak of the "nigger" as of another species, but used the old slang epithet as narrator in referring to the mysterious soul of a nigger. In so doing he apparently placed himself among those who believed that the "colour bar" had a factual foundation apart from prejudice born of fear. For in *The Nigger of the Narcissus* the Negro is presented as the only civilized and highly intelligent personality on the ship, and Conrad knew what he was doing when he wrote his tale. Many sardonic or ironic touches belonging to this theme are equally deliberate in the long novel (many people think his best), *Nostromo,* and the brilliant tale of the Belgian Congo, *Heart of Darkness.*

Conrad's imaginative work and his essays, and also *The Mirror of the Sea: A Personal Record,* for example, suggest that his biography can be divided into two themes or backgrounds: seamanship and authorship. The suggestion is so plain that it seems to have caused even Mr. Visiak to exaggerate it. Although discussion of the relative value of the different parts of Conrad's work has brought no more agreement than existed when he died, I feel that our knowledge of Conrad's life and an appreciation of the psychology in all his work must impress us with its homogeneous character. The most remarkable thing about Conrad's work (apart from the astonishing achievement of such powerful writing in an acquired language) is that it is all in the same tone and reflects a few fundamental human situations, regardless of setting, for Conrad was essentially an imaginative moralist. The settings are no more than settings, however colourful and "atmospheric": at sea (as most of the stories are) or on land, geographically far apart, *i.e.,* in the Far East (as in many of the earlier stories including *Youth* and *An Outcast of the Islands*) or in Europe, as in *Under Western Eyes,* or tales like "The Duel" and

"Il Conde," or in an imaginary South American republic (*Nostromo*).

It is possible to see the autobiographical strain in Conrad's most imaginative fiction, especially his Polish background. The sea was his means of escape from the unhappy past and the seaman's tradition of duty was a support. When he joined the British Merchant Marine service he recognized in his career more possibility of self-expression, and his admiration of the craft and traditions of seamanship was extended to the role of Britain in the world, especially as a champion of freedom. Acquiring the English language gave him the medium he wanted for a fuller expression of his experience and knowledge in writing. In a long conversation with me in 1922, a report of which I included in my subsequent study of him, he recalled his return to London from the sea for the last time. At that time, he was finishing his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, and he recalled the excitement about Gladstone's victory in the just completed general election. To him British politics seemed (it was during the post-war Coalition Government) to have become meaningless. "But I am watching things with interest," he added, "as one who loves humanity. I am basing all my hopes for Europe on England."

I look back and wonder what he would be saying today, hoping he could repeat that, even though with some modification. He had in that conversation told me of his love for England and that he was settled for good in his adopted country; but before his death in 1924 he had begun to formulate plans for returning to Poland. The unrest in him, not yet stilled by the great output of energy into his writing, prompted him to round off his life's voyage by this return to the beginning. For even in his varied literary works he had remained the exile, seeking refuge. The haunted characters in his books, their never-satiated longing for atonement, the vivid panorama of his "romantic realism," come to us with clearer understanding when we see them as the price he paid for his unhappy divorce from his own people—a people who were both Slav and Roman Catholic and were charged with bitter memories and with unresolved inner conflicts. Joseph Conrad's real name, let us recall in this month, was Teodor Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski.

If I may conclude this article with the concluding paragraph of my long out-of-print book on Conrad:—

> Confronted with the mystery and the hunger of existence, what shall we do? In Conrad's answer, for himself, to this ineludible question, is the very substance of his personality. In the answer made to it by the souls of the men and women he creates is all the substance of his work, that work which has in it "all the truth of life... a moment of vision, a sigh, a smile—and the return to an eternal rest."

R. L. MEGROZ

THE ROLE OF THE STORY-TELLER IN THE MODERN WORLD

[**Shri Manjeri S. Isvaran** has offered us some useful thoughts in this essay. Time changes not the human nature, and the seer and the psychologist of every age translate the same observations and experience in different forms. The ancient art of story-telling charms alike the teller and the listener.—ED.]

"Once upon a time," began the grandmother, and the child, quivering with excitement in every limb, questioned her eagerly whenever she made a little pause: "What happened next, Granny?"

"Long, long ago," started the minstrel at the court, and the epic bard hummed the heroic measures of Valmiki and Vyasa, and throngs of the learned as well as the lay sat listening to him at the sacrificial sessions. This entertaining and edifying recital was continued by the ubiquitous *kathak* and the *bhat*; the *kirtankar* added music and the *chakyar*, the mime.

"Tell me a story"—there are no more magical words in any language to hold children from play and old men from the chimney-corner.

In the *Tales of Vikramaditya* the formula runs:—

King Bhoja consulted the astrologers to find an auspicious day for him to mount the throne. At the appointed hour, as he was about to mount, he heard a voice cry, "Stop! Stop!" Hurriedly the King drew back his foot and exclaimed: "Who speaks?"

We are well acquainted with the beginning: the statuette (thirty-two of them adorning the pedestal of Vikramaditya's famous throne) telling the story—familiar as the other refrain in *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*: "At this point Scheherazade saw the approach of dawn and said she would continue her story on the following night."

There is such delight in nostalgic harking back; and thus was the insight of the prophets and the thought of the philosophers brought to the common man in a variety of garb, by the story-teller who, while sanctifying in his mind—and so enriching it—distinct places and peoples so that they became dearer, and more real to the listener than his own home or kinsfolk, bore at the same time the burden of maintaining the nation's moral values and its great ideals of character and conduct.

India was the nursery of story and fable and the Indian story-teller was as fertile in tales inculcating practical wisdom and worldly polity as in illuminating epic and religious myth. The animal fables of the Indian *Panchatantra* spread all over the world through the Persian *Kalila wa Dimna* and the repository of the romantic yarns the story-teller spun, namely, *Brihat Katha* (the Great Story), became the inexhaustible

source of themes for later poets, playwrights and legend-makers.

Everywhere it has been the same. As W. Somerset Maugham says in his Preface to the volume of short stories *Creatures of Circumstance* :—

> Since the beginning of history men have gathered round the camp fire or in a group in the market place to listen to the telling of stories. The desire to listen to them appears to be as deeply rooted in the human animal as the sense of property.

Yet it cannot be said that there has been any systematic and critical study of this most ancient of arts, the art of story-telling, "from the days of the Greeks and Romans, through the *jongleurs*, Boccaccio, Malory, Lyly"; [1] Herodotus, Æsop, Hans Andersen, Grimm, Gunaddhya, Vishnusharman, Somadeva, the authors of the Buddhistic and Jain *jatakas* and parables. Today this time-honoured form of entertainment and instruction seems to have received a new lease of life and power, necessitating the turning of our attention to what should be the objectives and standards of one who would handle it effectively for the ennoblement of mankind. And

> when we reflect that the best that mankind has ever had, to show us liberty, humility, and love, we have had by way of stories and by no other way, we surely owe a debt to any storyteller who truly tells a tale.[2]

In the contemporary Indian scene, the story, more particularly the short story as an art-form, has become very popular in the country's several major languages, and also with those who use English as their vehicle of expression. The innate Indian predilection for the tale has, as it were, been revivified by contact with Western literature whose fiction, more than any other *genre*, has exerted an extensive influence on the writers of about the last three decades here. In the West the story has been intimately connected, especially in its more recent developments, with the social, political and economic upheavals in the community, and authors have focused attention, in their stories, on specific problems. This characteristic of the modern short story, whether British, American or European, is also evident in its Indian counterpart and it is, therefore, germane to consider what role the story-teller in India has to play in the moulding of the new life with which this ancient country is now seething.

Inventiveness is the first and main basis of a story. As Rajasekhara said, there is no writer who has not lifted some material from another, and also there is no writer worth the name who has not been able to present it in a fresh setting and shape. According to Heinrich Zim-

[1] "Telling a Story." By PHYLLIS BENTLEY, in *Writing for Love or Money*.

[2] "The Purpose of Learning." By GORDON KEITH CHALMERS (*The American Review*, October 1956. United States Information Service, New Delhi.)

mer in his Preface, "The Dilettante Among Symbols," to his *The King and the Corpse*:—

Year in, and year out, tales are conceived, committed to writing, devoured, forgotten....A few survive, and these, like a scattering of seeds, are blown across the generations, propagating new tales and furnishing spiritual nourishment to many peoples. Most of our own literary inheritance has come to us in this way, from remote epochs, from distant, strange corners of the world.

The very novelty of the story is its appeal and infinite are the variations that the story-teller can introduce. He can endow his narrative with that elusive element we call human interest, bring our emotions into harmony with the emotions of the *personæ* he delineates, induce us to identify ourselves with them in their joys and sorrows or involve us in an intricate pattern of life which a changing world and times out of joint impose. A short story can be a fable or a parable, real or fantasy, a true presentation or a parody, sentimental or satirical; serious in intent, or a light-hearted diversion; it can be any of these, but to be memorable it must catch the eternal in the casual, invest a moment with the immensity of time. The masters have done it, each creating his own autonomous form, setting within its brief compass a striking incident, weaving a breath-taking narrative, revealing character through circumstance, psychological probing and piquant dialogue integrated with the descriptive and the dramatic. There is no better illustration of literary capacity in suggestion and imaginative incandescence than can be found in a good short story.

But this is not all. Through the incident and its artistic treatment the writer is endeavouring to place before the reader some problem and its resolution. The short story inevitably tries to bring home some lesson, but in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. No real author ever appears to teach, but all great authors have always been leaders of epochs.

It is gratifying that the Indian short story has become a widely used medium, but there is a good deal of mechanical fabrication, imitative, anæmic, and unblended with the native ethos and lacking that subtlety of touch which makes an artistic work a spontaneous emanation of the creative activity of the people. Its narrow plot is no more in the possession of the authentic master-craftsmen; it has become a veritable Tom Tiddler's ground into which tyros and writers *manque* dash headforemost, crying: "Look, we are here, picking up gold, picking up silver," but in truth picking up only dross. The social *milieu* and the political scene in India, thanks to external impacts, are at present in a state of flux. The rapid multiplication of periodicals and the literary interest evinced by the daily press have gained the widest possible

public for the current story-teller, and like the demagogue he could, today, sway the vast body of his anonymous readers with the ideas he could expound through his writings. But whatever the ideology he may elect to pursue he cannot use the artistic medium for pure propaganda. Indoctrination does not go with the creative process and æsthetic expression. Today, as never before, parties and forms of political organizations think that they can seize any means to extend the bounds of their allegiances, and art and literature have not escaped their ghoulish exploitation. However, an imaginative production will have its value in perpetuity only to the extent to which it can lay claim to the verities of life. What is merely purposive inside a coterie and sensational with the transient turmoils which it depicts cannot hope to endure unless it holds a core of eternal, universal truth.

Some years ago, while delivering the annual address of the National Book League of which he is President, John Masefield, England's Poet Laureate and himself a superb story-teller, made a strong plea for the resuscitation of the art of story-telling. He said :—

I love stories, I prefer them to be touched with beauty and strangeness. I like them to go on for a long time, in a river of narrative; and I like tributaries to come in upon the main stream, and exquisite bayous and backwaters to open out, into all of which the mind can go exploring after one has learned the main stream....I want a re-telling of the nation's stories, so that they may be a link among us. I want the great tales to be in every mind, so that all may share them, and all our makers remake them.

Words of noble eloquence endeavouring to break the barriers that are raised between man and fellow man!

The story-teller, today, cannot abstract himself from the contemporary world; he cannot also absolve himself of the role of the seer—one who sees truth and the inner harmony on which things are strung together. His voice now, more than at any other time, should not be that of destructive explosion, but of peace and good will, "winning the world as the rose or lily wins it," and should go on winning it with the marvel of his intelligent heart, seeing other hearts unite in sympathy, shared wonder and the joy of beauty. He is the Ancient Mariner, and the World the Wedding Guest.

MANJERI S. ISVARAN

A NEW KIND OF AWARENESS

[We publish here the concluding portion of the article by **Mr. Carl Christian Jensen.**—ED.]

Terra firma is a friendly frame of reference. Even in the darkroom we are able to orientate ourselves by sliding our feet along the floor. Thoreau speaks of feeling the path with his feet on his way back to Walden Pond:—

> Sometimes, after coming home thus late on a dark and muggy night, when my feet felt the path which my eyes could not see, dreaming and absent-minded all the way, until I was aroused by having to raise my hand to lift the latch, I have not been able to recall a single step of my walk, and I have thought that perhaps my body would find its way home if its master should forsake it, as the hand finds its way to the mouth without assistance.

There is a bond between the ground and the mover; the one cannot keep faith without the other. There is a faithful bond between birds and the air or planes and the air, between fishes and the sea or ships and the sea, between beasts and the ground or vehicles and the ground. If the bond does not remain affectionate, there is violence and even disaster as between lovers. *Terra firma* is a dependable friend for our feet, though not on a sleety night. And other factors than sleet at times make our faithful friend, *terra firma,* shaky or bumpy or sticky or slippery, and not only for our hands and feet.

Our eyes and ears, all our senses, our minds, even society at large, crosses each its respective brook on its own respective plank. Society at large, as well as our minds, our senses, our bodies, must manœuvre on steady and faithful planks. This is perhaps the first law of sanity. Things cannot move in an orderly way except through a consistent medium. Life cannot leap at all without the same scrupulous bond between stride and road. Without a trustworthy tradition, human evolution would congeal or would take a tumble or be bogged down. No group life could possibly survive, and therefore no civilization, if we were always cheating one another and, on our tramp through life, tripping up our brothers.

On the road of human evolution the speed limit is such that, as we advance, we must absorb and counteract sudden changes in the landscape. If our frame of reference unexpectedly begins to rock and is not counterbalanced, we grow bewildered or enraged, or we lose our balance. Each of us has a hierarchy of frames of reference by which to orientate himself. But sometimes, as during social upheavals, the changes are like earthquakes. It is then that we need a seer, or the people perish. Socrates said on the day he died:—

> The soul is dragged by the body into

the region of the changeable and wanders and is confused; the world spins around her, and she is like a drunkard, when she touches change.

Why do children, piling up blocks in early childhood, scream with anger when we interrupt them at mealtime? When they grow older, their half-finished ball game demands completion, even when they are in dire need of food and rest. The glint in their eyes is more beholden to the flight of the ball from pitcher to batter to catcher than to their mother's call to supper. The flight of the ball follows the same law of "closure" as does a half-circle. And so does the ball game *in toto*.

The law of closure is as universal as creation. All things and all lives and all minds crave form or shape. In a northern tongue the Creator is called the "Shaper." When a child looks at a half-circle on the blackboard, it craves to complete the figure. The circle is as natural, it seems, as life itself unfolding and closing, with an inner charm that the immaculate mind of a child craves to complete. A melody is also like that. A melody demands that the last note be sung. If we only hum the first notes of our national anthem, it is like looking at a half-circle that craves to be closed up. The absence of the last note is like the gap in a circle, and a tension accompanies the pause or gap. Maybe another note could be substituted; but the very one that is absent is the one that fits best. Otherwise there will be a dent in the melody, as when a curve other than the right one fills the gap in the circle.

Anything unexplained leaves a gap. We remember the time we mislaid our spade. Something drove us to spin far-fetched explanations. The suspense was more painful than our momentary need of the implement. We needed to close up the gap and somehow bridge the mystery. And when finally we found the spade in the woods, where we had been digging hemlock saplings for a hedge, our suspicion of a pilfering neighbour vanished and the tension untwined. For, like the unfinished melody, a mystery also is a half-circle that demands completion.

We glance back at periods in our past, and we discern slowly healing wounds which had scarred the mind but which luckily, because of the law of closure, have left no rift. We recall how often during pensive moods we have planned our future days with some sort of satisfying closure in view. We have heard of poor washerwomen in the slums, who, years before they die, buy their own fancy funeral on the instalment plan. There is no doubt the same yearning in their hearts to close up their life circle gracefully.

And that is why on our daily stroll we are drawn towards buildings in process of construction. Each granite block seems to exact a certain shape for its neighbour

even in a rustic stone chimney. We grow tense while we watch the stonemason select and fit and cement each individual stone. He climbs off the scaffold and searches the pile on the ground till he finds the right stone. He chips the edges with hammer and chisel, he blows the dust off the surface, he strokes the stone with a rough palm and scans the edges with a quizzical eye. Each stone is like the note in a melody. We watch him hoist it up the scaffold and lift it into the gap. Only then do we relax.

The torn tissue of an organism heals by the same law of closure. Who could ever forget the miracle revealed through the microscope of a bleeding artery or capillary in the webfoot of a frog? The tissue sets to work at once to mend the gap and close the leakage. The busy little corpuscles sew up the walls of the artery from within. It is like watching the Divine Shaper at work.

When we stroll down the wide sidewalks on West Fourteenth Street in Manhattan, we are soon forced into line. One stream of pedestrians hastens by, fringing the curb. Another stream saunters by along the shop windows and in the opposite direction. It is quite a struggle, without being rude and causing anger, to walk against the crowd, or even to cross the streams obliquely.

But if a blind fiddler plays his falsetto tune in the centre of the stream, or if a poor cripple peddles his song sheets there, we all swerve off gently and without ramming a shoulder against him. And if a police car is in pursuit of a hit-and-run driver, and especially if wild shots are being fired, the two streams on the sidewalk merge and stand still, exchanging comments. And if there is an air alarm, as during the Second World War, the two sluggish streams become a hundred leaping rivulets that help each other find shelter.

From our physics class in youth we may remember what were called "vector quantities" of masses in motion. These quantities in the physical world have been graphed with mathematical accuracy, and they are the melodies of mechanics. They are hard to explain in simple terms. They are defined by our scientists as velocities and forces, displacements and accelerations, that combine and are spun into a firm entanglement. And all together they determine the speed and strength and direction of their own entanglement.

Our solar system can be said to be such an entanglement of motions and masses and directions within our galaxy of stars. Our moon is a minor entanglement of vectors within the solar system. And the surface of the ocean fluctuates both by solar and lunar vectors. At times the crest of the lunar tide spills itself into the trough of the solar tide. At other times the solar and the lunar vectors intertwine more firmly

than at other times, and the tidal crest formed by both rises above its usual levels, and then the tidal trough formed by both sinks below its usual levels.

Vectors that move living masses cannot be graphed as clearly as vectors that move physical masses. Emigration to the New World was a movement of living masses, and the vector quantities of these living masses have been unravelled somewhat, in the rough, by our social scientists. Vectors that move spiritual masses are still less tangible. The deliverance of the slaves was such a movement. It is too simple a curve we plot of Christianity, if we include but the vectors of Judaism and Hellenism; or of Mohammedanism, if we include but the vectors of Hebrew and Christian lore.

Climate and geography and other physical factors no doubt pull the masses towards and into the more pleasant pastures on the earth's surface. But there are also the psychological vectors. A particular valley, for example, may have been the centre of attraction around which tribes and nations have flowed and ebbed in one tidal wave after another. Its vector quantities today may be traceable not only to the Second World War and to the displaced persons in overcrowded Europe, but also to spiritual forces that have lain dormant for ages.

As there are tidal stresses or vector quantities within the earth's crust, so there are tidal stresses within a stratified society, and tidal stresses within a stratified human mind. At a symphony concert we hear someone gasp: "I was carried away!" Often it takes less than that. And this, of course, is better than for a stratified robot mind to crack up. Sometimes a single person is able to change the direction of the masses. Lincoln freed the slaves. Hitler almost turned the whole world into slavery.

A noted biologist has said: "To an imaginary being, with a life span of ten million years, evolution would seem very rapid. To God, who is eternal, evolution may well have been instantaneous." Individual life is too short for any one person to observe the movements of distant stars. But the experience of man is lengthened through tradition, so that throughout the centuries groups of astronomers overlap and behave as if one person had kept on living and kept on retaining his memory.

On the human scale of observation things depend for their very existence on their duration—on their rate of speed and change. Explosives may burn slowly, or may blow up in one-millionth of a second. A projectile, rolling on the deck, can be stopped by the hand. But the same shell, with a speed of many hundred feet per second, passes through heavy armour plates. Films show sights too slow for the naked eye to catch, such as the blossoming of a flower. And films of a thousand

exposures per second unveil things otherwise too rapid for the naked eye, such as the flight of a bullet. But without the law of "constancy" we should recognize nothing.

We recognize shapes that neither change nor move—cliffs are like that. And we recognize shapes that move but do not change—ships are like that. And we recognize shapes that do not move but do change—a forest is like that. Also we recognize shapes that both move and change—a herd of cattle is like that.

What a chaotic world we should be living in if change and movement were inconsistent! If our sinews shrank and stretched and dribbled away with the weather, life would be a constant masquerade, and we should all be strangers and all the time be living among strange things. Why does the unfamiliar face of a newborn infant continually change and yet grow more and more familiar? It is not because ancestral traits win out in the wrestling match with environmental handicaps, of which birth itself often is the worst. It is rather because individuality unfolds in a definite direction. Individuality is like a melody. The notes may all be changed, and yet the changes be so related that the melody can always be recognized. It is thus that change and movement achieve identity—they are not capricious; they are consistent.

Things change and move in many a tempo. One tempo finds a welcome within the threshold of our senses. Another tempo slips by without entering. A third and a fourth collide within and cause confusion. But we do identify some things, so that the world about us grows familiar, instead of remaining strange, as if we were born each day and had to reorientate ourselves anew.

This rhythmic pulsation of change and movement in things and lives and minds helps us to answer the question, "How are we really able to know anything?" The question has been asked by man from the time of ancient stillness. It is partly to be answered by this law of constancy that vibrates through creation. Yet the law escapes our senses almost as much as do the sunbeams embedded in a chunk of coal.

Gestures group themselves within the confines of rhythms and shape the dance. Without a rhythmic tune, the dance is apt to go astray. But a tune fades out and can no longer be recognized if each note is struck an hour apart. And even a million trees do not make a forest, not if they are a mile apart. A flock of sheep cannot be recognized as a flock unless the sheep are fairly close together. If a flock of sheep and a herd of cattle intermingle in the field, they are no longer, despite their unlikeness, two groups but one. And, if a cow and a sheep are grazing close together, human eyes will view them as a pair, more so than two cows or two sheep that

are alike but happen to be further apart.

In the social field, too, we observe this relationship between likeness and unlikeness, nearness and distance. Some of our immigrant brothers and sisters are social hybrids vibrating between the homeland and their adopted country. They fail to assimilate a new culture, and they also fail to follow up the culture they left behind.

These themes tug and ram one another in things and in lives and in minds. Often proximity is the stronger, often equality is the more pugnacious. The themes are as universal as the pull of gravity. Without them there could be no melodies, no art and no sanity. For then nothing could ever be grouped and the mind would scatter like vapour. Yet the themes do tug at one another, and it is then that there are tensions in the arts, in society and in individual life.

It is fascinating, even by such a simple experiment as that of changing the position of white and black buttons, to notice a visual structure leaping from one condition of white buttons pairing off and black buttons pairing off, to a second condition of black and white buttons pairing off. A black and a white button will pair off because of their nearness. Otherwise, of course, two whites and two blacks naturally would. There is turmoil when likeness and unlikeness, nearness and distance, hang equally vigorous in the balance. It is as when a child begins to walk. It is thus that the artist creates life on his canvas.

The mind of man frisks about in reveries and daydreams and then heads for home, twinging like a terrier that has been on a rampage through the wilds, to be chastened or joshed by his master. While we live and have our being in the present moment, we detour through memory and imagination to meet other minds in other places and in other ages. When we read Spinoza or Plato, there is a detour away from ourselves and a communing with these masters who are still alive and yet long dead. And then we return back to ourselves—back and forth like that.

The theme of detour and return is clear-cut among the atoms and molecules. In a pinch of salt or a drink of water, or in the intricate cycle, or cycles, of organic growth, we know of an infinite variety of rhythmic escapades, lovely as a melody, lofty as a symphony, and, like mathematics, consistent. The energies that lie piled up within the atom detour and return with rhythmic precision, so that our scientists are half promising us future power plants potent enough to change our climate.

We find these detours and returns along the main highway that all life must travel. The theme is discernible in the species, each species steering a singular course through myriads of other species, succumbing or

gaining strength by survival values lost or won—too heavy armaments or too scanty. There are the gales that shape the eagle's wings, and the surges that shape the salmon's fins, and the rock that shapes the horse's hooves, intermingling through dynamic æons the economies of herd and flock, till species become specialists—swimmers and fliers, divers and waders, diggers and runners, climbers and crawlers.

Men and women detour and return like that through their daily lives. From early morning and throughout the day, we detour to form our specialized groups and our division of labour. At night we return from store and factory, office and shipyard, hospital and field and forest, to join our home group again. Children hurry off to school and become grouped and regrouped from season to season. The college youth is grouped and regrouped from hour to hour. Smaller tots, of various breeds, play together on the sidewalk. And on the avenue at night grown-ups gather in groups. A few blocks one way they gossip in Italian or West Indian Spanish, a few blocks the other way they gossip in Yiddish or Norwegian. The native tongue is like the refrain in a ballad, and they finish off their daily stanza in the ballad with a refrain.

Things and lives and minds behave like that—a series of detours and returns, a grouping and regrouping, a rhythmic interchange of action and reaction that are like patterns in a folk dance. It is the rhythmic action and reaction that shape and reshape the social group, that shape the individual mind, and that shape the atoms and the stars, so that even the traffic on the Milky Way becomes a dance.

We all are idle dreamers, and so caprice impels us, like dead leaves swept before the wind. We are also robots, and so we are slaves to automatic routine. But we also compose patterns of creative activity, and so we are free spirits. It is not probable, of course, that merely by knowing nature's dynamic laws of form we shall acquire a sudden creative insight, and so shape and reshape ourselves and society overnight with the intuitive wisdom of a genius.

Yet something quite as startling as recently happened in the atomic field may soon happen in the field of the mind. Less and less shall we be fixated on our subconscious and our self-conscious. A brand-new type of awareness has stepped over the threshold. Integral thinking has become a runner-up to analysis as well as to inferential and inductive thinking. Maybe, after all—as mystics both of the East and the West have been telling us for ages—man may acquire superconsciousness, something akin to omniscience. Already integral thinking points that way both in physics and physiology, in psychology and sociology.

CARL CHRISTIAN JENSEN

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MUHAMMAD IQBAL

[Alama Sir Muhammad Iqbal should be better known to the Hindu public. He was not a narrow-minded orthodox Muslim; his philosophy, enshrined in verse of beauty and power, has a universal message for an idolatrous civilization which worships the image of money, of lust, of greed, of death. His Muslim friends and followers will do real justice to Iqbal if they will point to the universal nature of their master's message. *The Secrets of Self, The Tulip of Sinai, The Complaint and the Answer* and *Poems from Iqbal,* all available in English, ought to be popularized. Iqbal's mysticism offers strong wine, raises strong doubt of our civilization surviving, and yet awakens hope. How apposite are the Urdu lines to the present day:—

> Neither in Asia nor in Europe flows the vital current;
> Extinction of all Selfhood here, there all Conscience banned.
>
> In men's hearts wake new paroxysms of revolution's torrent:
> Perhaps for all our world outworn extinction is at hand.

And his advice to modern man in this plight:—

> Advance from captivity to empire!
> Think of Self and be a man of action!
> Be a man of God, bear mysteries within!

In the following article we have numerous useful thoughts on Iqbal and his philosophy offered by our esteemed contributor **Dr. S. Vahiduddin**.—ED.]

Sir Muhammad Iqbal was first and foremost a poet, but a poet with a mission and a message. His poetry was saturated with his philosophy, and his philosophy and poetry drew inspiration from all that is best in the East and the West. He had studied philosophy in England and Germany, and deeply felt the influence of Western thinkers like Nietzsche and Bergson and of Western seers and poets like Goethe. He himself has given a fairly systematic exposition of his views in his lectures on "The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," and these, taken together with some of his own comments about the philosophical import of his poems, are the main sources of our knowledge about his *Weltanschauung*.

But in any appraisal of the "philosophy" of a poet his poetry cannot be ignored. All that Iqbal thought as a philosopher and all that he imagined as a poet was infused with prophetic fervour and supported by profound religious convictions.

Iqbal's philosophy is religious, but its religiousness is activistic, not contemplative. It emphasizes "deed" rather than "idea." But Iqbal thinks that an appreciation of religious values is not possible without any reference to "inner experience," on which religion rests in the last analysis and without re-living it as a vital process. He is not, however, given to dogmatism and emphatically rejects "finality" in philosophic thought. He regards the present moment as especially propitious for

any re-assessment of religious philosophy. The foundations of classical physics were tottering, and Iqbal was hopeful of a new *rapprochement* between philosophy and religion. The pivotal concept on which the whole philosophy of Iqbal moves is the dynamic of Self. One of his Persian poems is exclusively devoted to an elaboration of the philosophy of Self. In a letter to Professor Nicholson, the English translator of his poem, Iqbal has made some significant remarks about the philosophical foundations of what he felt as a poet. Without doubt his comments are more revealing than the poem itself. He affirms in unmistakable terms the reality of the finite centres of experience. Their finiteness may be infected with relativity, but, all this relativity notwithstanding, their existence is not illusory. He says:—

> To my mind, this inexplicable finite centre of experience is the fundamental fact of the universe. All life is individual, there is no such thing as universal life. God himself is an individual; He is the most unique individual.

He subscribes to the view of McTaggart that the universe is an association of individuals. But in his view the universe is still in the making; it is on its way from chaos to cosmos and the process of creation has not come to a standstill. It is for man to participate in the unceasing work of divine creativity, to work with God and for God.

His philosophy of the Self led him to revolt against all forms of pantheism which aim at salvation in the total loss of the individual Self in the universal life. Life is eminently individual, with ego (*khudi*) as its highest form. But the individuality is not yet complete in man:—

> The greater his distance from God, the less his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completest person. Not that he is finally absorbed in God. On the contrary, he absorbs God into himself.

Man is partly free and partly determined and the more he approaches God the more he enjoys freedom. "In one word life is an endeavour for freedom."

Life on earth finds its continuation in the personality of man and the personal life can only be maintained by perpetual tensions. Iqbal is the philosopher of personal life and hence finds in the concrete and determined manifestations of life on the personal level the ultimate criterion of all values, æsthetic, social and moral. As the idea of Ego or Self is fundamental in Iqbal's philosophy, it is necessary to be quite clear about the ontological status that he assigns to the Self. The Self is real and ultimately it alone is real. Iqbal finds it significant that even thinkers like Bradley, who made a searching criticism of the idea of Self and could discover nothing in it but a mass of contradiction and confusion, were forced to grant some reality to it, how-

ever inexplicable it was on the rational plane. Says Iqbal:—

We may easily grant that the ego, in its finitude, is imperfect as a unity of life. Indeed, its nature is wholly aspiration after a unity more inclusive, more effective, more balanced, and unique. Who knows how many different kinds of environment it needs for its organization as a perfect unity? At the present stage of its organization it is unable to maintain the continuity of its tension without the constant relaxation of sleep. An insignificant stimulus may sometimes disrupt its unity and nullify it as a contracting energy. Yet however thought may dissect and analyze, our feeling of egohood is ultimate.

The ego, according to Iqbal, enjoys a unity which is unique in its kind. It is a unity where all its parts interpenetrate. But the experience that the ego undergoes has a privacy of its own. It is not shared by another. The ego, however, does not stand over and above the fulness of experience. A tension is born of the interplay of the ego and the environment and the ego persists in it as a directive energy. Iqbal holds that the assumption of matter as a metaphysical principle is gratuitous. Matter then is reduced into "egos of a low order out of which emerges the ego of a higher order, when their association and interaction reach a certain degree of co-ordination." He considers the ultimate ego as immanently active in Nature. It includes the personal ego in its own activity and freedom within limits. Now the view that only egos are real and that there are different levels of sentience which find their culmination in God is what Leibnitz taught and it is a pity that the influence of this great thinker on Iqbal is not taken into full account yet.

But what is the ultimate destiny of the ego? Iqbal, as we have already noted, emphatically rejects pantheistic Sufism, which sees the final absorption of the ego in God as its end and object. Finitude is not a curse and the goal of man is not deliverance from the finitude of individuality. Iqbal at one stage of his thought is inclined to believe that by its work and deeds the ego creates a future for itself or else meets with dissolution. He affirms boldly: "Personal immortality, then, is not ours as of right; it is to be achieved by personal effort. Man is only a candidate for it."

This view, which makes immortality conditional and restricts its scope, is a serious deviation from the orthodox teaching that is based on the Quranic visions of the life beyond. Islam and Christianity consider the ego immortal as such and make its state in the Hereafter depend on what it does here and now. Iqbal himself, in the beautiful elegy that he wrote on the death of his mother, seems to see for every man a future and not to deny it to anyone. In the very lecture in which he has made immortality subject to individual merit, he

observes that "in view of the past history it is highly improbable that his career should come to an end with the dissolution of his body." How can it then depend "on our adopting in this life modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension"? Indeed as a devout disciple of Rumi, the great mystic, it would be inconsistent for Iqbal to insist on this view. Was it not Rumi who saw evolution proceeding beyond the grave and making man more than what he is within the confines of earthly life?

But the problem of immortality takes us right into the problem of time and it is this problem which especially engaged the attention of Iqbal, both as a poet and as a philosopher. In his approach to this great problem Iqbal is profoundly influenced by Bergson and his idea of duration. Duration, however, is not prior to the Self, but can only be understood in relation to the Self. Iqbal distinguishes between what he calls the efficient self and the appreciative Self. The efficient self is the self of day-to-day life. Its states of consciousness exclude one another. Its time may be short or long. It is a straight line, the points of which exclude one another.

The appreciative Self reveals a deeper aspect. Says Iqbal:—

> It is only in moments of profound meditation, when the efficient self is in abeyance, that we sink into our deeper self and reach the inner core of experience.

There is an interpretation of elements which are non-serial in character. The real Self, which is appreciative, has a single indivisible "now," whereas the efficient self has "now's" in isolation.

Iqbal is Bergsonian in so far as he emphasizes the non-repetitive creative aspect of Reality. His criticism of Nietzsche's idea of Eternal Recurrence is also based on the fact that on this assumption life is robbed of the element of surprise and novelty, in short, of its creativity. But here Iqbal parts company with Bergson. For Bergson life is a-teleological, without any purpose or idea that guides its movement; for Iqbal it is eminently purposive. Life is not only retrospective but prospective. Says Iqbal:—

> Life is only a series of acts of attention and an act of attention is inexplicable without reference to a purpose, conscious or unconscious.

He concedes that the universe is not moving towards a far-off divine event; it is certainly not a realization of a divine plan. If it were, there would have been no place for the creative act, for novelty or initiative. Who can deny, however, that life is selective after all? "Life is a passage through a series of deaths. But there is a system in the continuity of this passage." And again: "A time process cannot be conceived as a line already drawn. It is a line in the drawing—an actualization of possibilities."

This unity is the organic whole

of life, thought and purpose, and can be conceived only as the oneness of the Self. Here it is that Iqbal finally dissociates himself from Bergson and is infused with the spirit of Leibnitz and Fichte. "To exist in pure duration is to be a self, and to be a self is to be able to say 'I am.'" But this "I am-ness" has degrees. Human selfhood encounters a not-self. But the divine Self has no "other" confronting it. Nature is only a "fleeting moment" in the divine life. Self is immanent in Nature and quickens it with its own life. Thus what we observe in the processes of Nature are the ways of God and in its observation we enjoy the intimacy of prayer.

Mystic experience has been the mainspring of all living religions and it reveals another level of consciousness. Religion as an experience of this verity does not exhaust itself in feeling. It is a feeling with a cognitive context. But Iqbal does not see like Ghazzali any cleavage between thought and mystic intuition. Against Kant he holds that discursive thought does not circumscribe the whole reach of thought. It is only conceptual thought which misses the concrete fulness of Reality and constructs a fictitious picture of the universe. "Both Kant and Ghazzali failed to see that thought, in the very act of knowledge passes beyond its own finitude." The infinite is immanent in its movement and it is in fact the infinite which goads it from within.

But in his poetry Iqbal seems to seek refuge from the encroachments of thought in the ecstasy of love (*ishq*), and like a true disciple of Rumi sees in love the panacea of all our ills. What is love but an illumination of the heart? "Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realize them." Knowledge which is not incandescent with love and remains a stranger to its travails is of no avail. It is not love that is blind; it is knowledge without love that cannot see.

It is now clear that the philosophy of Iqbal draws inspiration from different sources, from Nietzsche and Bergson, from the critical evaluation of the assumptions of recent trends in physics by Eddington and Whitehead, but above all from the mystic apprehensions of the great Sufi Jalaluddin Rumi. He was averse to a world of beauty, however glamorous it might be, which remains supremely indifferent to the turmoils of life and does not impel us to heroic action and affirmation of life. Hence he saw in the most enchanting poetry of Hafiz a tendency to escape from the responsibilities of action and free choice. But it was in what might be called the transcendent evolution of Rumi that he found the embodiment of the true spirit of Islam. Rumi was more of an evolutionist than the evolutionists of our day, whose vision is confined to this life and whose idea of evolution evolves

nothing beyond this short span. In Nietzsche evolution denies its own principle and degrades itself into the doctrine of Eternal Recurrence. But with Rumi the seed of Humanity is buried in the earth to blossom afresh and shoot branches beyond the grave. And the Quran says in a very significant passage:—

Oh, I swear by the afterglow of sunset
And by the night and all that it enshroudeth
And by the moon when she is at the full,
That ye shall journey on from plane to plane.

Iqbal has fully assimilated the evolutionary zeal of his great master, which is so strikingly in consonance with Quranic visions and looks forward to the future with immense hope. On every stage of the evolutionary ascent the ego turns to account its new environment and unfolds its life in an "endless career." Iqbal looks beyond the stars and predicts for love new trials in new worlds.

But Iqbal's way to God is activistic and he warns the East against the dangers of mystic passivity. It is on this basis that he hails with pleasure the reform movement in Sufism which was initiated in India by the celebrated Sheikh Ahmad of Sarhand. The main target of its attack is the pantheistic doctrine of the unity of Being which was proclaimed by the great Moorish mystic Ibn Arabi. Sheikh Ahmad rejects the doctrine of the unity of Being as alien to the spirit of Islam and regards the experience of unity as a subjective signpost on the mystic path which is soon passed over. The ultimate experience is that of transcendence. God is beyond and supremely beyond.

Strangely enough, Iqbal himself has not imbibed this radical feeling of transcendence, and his poetry is replete with pantheistic expressions. He calls God, with the Sufis of the old order, a fragrance in the rose and feels the song of the nightingale as one with the scent of the flower. It should be noted that even Iqbal's guide on his way to God, Rumi, has given some of its finest expressions to the idea of the unity of Being. But what really repels Iqbal in the pantheistic mode of thought is the danger to the consciousness of individuality which is at the root of individual action. But in his political and social philosophy Iqbal completely integrates the individual in the common corporate life of the community, and for him an individual in isolation loses his individuality and his all.

To conclude: Iqbal is so near us that it is difficult to judge dispassionately the world he created. But this much is certain. He will go down in history as a teacher and a seer who has wandered not so much in quest of God but, as he himself says, in strenuous search of man. For him the man of the future is not the superman of Nietzsche who outgrows old values and cannot soar beyond this earth but the vicegerent of God on earth, perfectly attuned to life Divine. Life is ever young and ever green, and it is for man to

exploit to the full the possibilities of his existence. Iqbal's call to creative action was much needed in the East, which often lost itself in a feeling of unity which hardly reckoned with the infinite fulness of life and submerged itself in a consciousness of eternity that seldom counted with time, the principle of movement in phenomenal existence.

S. VAHIDUDDIN

INDIA AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The growing pressure of public opinion against the early replacement of English by Hindi as the official language of India and as the medium of instruction represents a force which a democratic government must take into account. Several warnings against precipitancy have been sounded, among them a temperate but pointed open letter on the subject which bore the date of October 15th and was published in *The Times of India*. The signers include a number of prominent and thoughtful patriots, among them Sir Mirza Ismail, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir Samuel Runganadhan, Shri V. P. Menon and several more. They maintained that the decision as to whether and when the change-over should be made ought to be left to the non-Hindi-speaking Indians, the chief sufferers from the change, and they felt that "national solidarity" required "such friendly accommodation rather than the imposition of Hindi by a majority vote in Parliament." General K. M. Cariappa, Retired Indian Commander-in-Chief, made out a strong case in *The Hindu* of October 22nd for accepting English as the *lingua franca*. His arguments deserve thoughtful consideration by every Indian. He cites Dr. H. C. Mukherjee's warning against the judicial isolation of each State which he believed would result from abandoning English now as the common language of the High Courts and might threaten national unity. General Cariappa does not envisage neglect of the Indian languages or of Sanskrit, but he urges the teaching of Basic English to all. He concludes that with English as India's national language,

> we can play our parts effectively to achieve and keep for all time peace and happiness for mankind, when the frequently expressed wish of ours to have a One World Government comes into being.

Mr. Frank Anthony, M.P., President-in-Chief of the All-India Anglo-Indian Association, addressing its annual general meeting at Hyderabad on October 27th, warned that to remove English from the country's educational pattern and particularly from the universities would inevitably reduce India to "a third-rate nation, particularly in the scientific and technological fields." It would, he claimed, greatly handicap the students in non-Hindi-speaking areas and "relegate non-Hindi-speaking people to the position of inferior citizens." He felt that another effect of the replacement of English by Hindi would be to destroy the country's administrative integrity, which he ascribed to recruitment to the all-India services on the basis of a single language.

These are cogent arguments and should be given their due weight before India takes a step which will be easier to take than to undo when its untoward effects become apparent.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

[**Professor A. M. Ghose,** who heads the Department of Philosophy in the Government College, Ajmer, not only recognizes the importance of India's keeping English; he proposes India's making a distinctive contribution to literary criticism in English. It involves the applying of India's classical canons of literary excellence to English literary works. The early Indian dramatists' disregard of the three unities of time, place and action demanded by the classical canons of the West may derogate from their achievement in the view of Western critics, although *Shakuntala* has won high praise. Conversely, the writers of Western tragedies can never measure up to the classical Indian demand for a play to end happily. But if it is unfair to judge the output of a writer by standards he never sought to meet, even if perhaps he knew them, acquaintance with the Indian canons of *Rasa* and *Dhwani* cannot but enrich the English writers' skill, while the centrality of *Dharma* in ancient Indian thought has its own message for a world adrift.—ED.]

A study of the nature and scope of English scholarship is desirable today when rapid changes are taking place in the academic life of the country. English scholarship, now more than a century old, should be reviewed from a wider perspective because the academic life is not only a branch but a tributary as well of the life of a nation. The circumstances in which the study of English was originally introduced are no more there. This, however, does not imply that English should cease to be studied. The reasons why English ought to be retained are all too well known. All that can be said here is that English is one of our cultural needs in the broadest sense of the term. However, I believe that English, in the form in which it was introduced, must cease to exist simply because the factors and forces which allowed English to establish itself no more prevail.

What India lost long before the English traders started dictating terms to the vanquished and weak potentates in the eighteenth century was her *swabhava,* character. She was not only politically subjugated but also culturally subjugable. If the study of English was given an ovation it was because, for the parched soil of the post-Mogul India, English, with all that it meant to the nineteenth-century Indian, was a huge rain-bearing monsoon cloud. It would not be true to say today that English was thrust upon India because that would at once be a distortion of facts and an unsympathetic appraisal of the attitudes of our great-grandfathers. If English was imposed upon some it was warmly received by many to whom it revealed new hopes and directions; English to them was associated with everything that was going to dominate tomorrow's world. Seen today in retrospect it must be said that they were endowed with fore-

sight; by accepting English they responded in the wisest manner to one of the great challenges offered by their times. English was studied because its knowledge gave employment; it was studied, secondly, because it disclosed new worlds of science and technology; and lastly, because it opened up worlds of beauty and imagination hitherto unknown. How did English disclose unseen worlds of beauty? It would be difficult to answer the question if we do not take the contemporary psychological factors into account. For one thing, it is absurd to think that the superiority of English culture was felt only in the fields of science and technology and not in arts and literature. It may be that the light which made English literature shine was borrowed from the brightness which belonged primarily to the political and scientific genius of the English people. For another thing, these admirers—and those others as well—were mostly ignorant about their country's heritage. The ancient Indian writings, poetry and literary criticism, for them, existed, if at all, dimly on the distant horizon of antiquity. Cut off for a long period from their already decadent cultural moorings, ignorant or oblivious of their rich past and vying with one another in their admiration of all that came from the West, these two or three generations of educated Indians could not but accept English in the way they did. If they did not believe that English was a foreign language and Shakespeare a foreign poet the reasons are not much different.

We have just celebrated the centenary of three of our universities. During an entire century, eventful in many significant respects, new facts have been unearthed, new interpretations have been offered and examined and new horizons have been scanned. The ancient literatures have been studied and appreciated in the light of new knowledge; the ancient codes of art criticism have been discussed and compared; the obscure truths have revealed themselves with added meaning and richness. It must, however, be admitted that in our zeal to understand and admire our cultural legacy we have, in many instances, overlooked the drawbacks and overstated the virtues. But the fact is that we have, if I may say so, culturally reclaimed ourselves, at least partially. A review of English scholarship in the light of these changes is interesting. What I propose to say is that English in India ought to be studied today in a different way, as a rich, wonderful and *foreign* literature. I am inclined to believe that the traditional manner in which English is studied is artificial and fruitless. If English scholarship, for example, in France has been characteristically French and in Germany German it is worth wishing for that it should be Indian here. If English is going to stay in this country its future is a fascinating subject for speculation. Croce's criticism of Goethe reveals an Italian

mind working on a German poet; Ulrici's treatment of Shakespeare, though absurd according to some, bears the stamp of German scholarship; Lytton Strachey's studies on French authors have a freshness that is essentially English. I am afraid we in this country have yet to evaluate, say, Shakespeare or Keats or Eliot from a characteristically Indian point of view. I do not find any reason why that should not be possible. It has not been possible either because our English scholars have neglected the Indian tools of art criticism or because they have tacitly assumed that these criteria are culpably foreign. I follow the first reason; the second betrays dearth of imagination. A Goethe could admire Kalidasa; I cannot see why we cannot appreciate Shakespeare, remaining Indians. If Shakespeare can be appreciated only by an Englishman, a view which I am sure his genuine admirers would never hold, then he would not have been immortal. I admit, an Indian appreciation *ipso facto* would be different from an English critic's appreciation. For that matter, Wilson Knight's Shakespeare is different from Coleridge's Shakespeare. This only shows that the great poet can be approached in different ways.

A comparison between Wordsworth's pantheism and the Vedanta, for example, does not mean that the English poet has been judged from an Indian point of view. Attempts at comparing Shelley and Tagore or Gorki and Premchand are not, strictly speaking, parts of literary criticism, however interesting they may be sociologically or historically. At its best a comparison of "world-views" is an interesting philosophical pastime. To draw parallels between English and Indian poets or literary artists is not precisely what I suggest. What I suggest really is that a conscious attempt be made to apply the Indian tools of literary criticism in evaluating English poets and authors. To my mind that is the only way to retain English in this country. It may be objected that behind an assertion of the kind made above there is the assumption that an application of the Indian criteria is entirely feasible. I do not for a moment mean to say that. I only suggest that we should see if such judgments are possible. Whether such judgments are possible or not can be seen only when we really undertake the task. The experiment will throw light not only on the objects judged but on the criteria themselves. If necessary the tools will have to be modified; that is the way to enrich and authenticate them. There are brilliant hints scattered in the writings of Sri Aurobindo, Ananda Coomaraswamy and S. N. Das Gupta.

It is undoubtedly a stupendous task. It is not so much a task for an individual as for a school of critics. Our contacts with the Greeks and Romans, with the Arabs and Persians and, lastly, with modern

Europe have fertilized our cultural life in ways not yet exhaustively assessed. In sculpture and architecture, in painting and music, and certainly in literature, splendid syntheses have been achieved at different periods. I doubt if any such synthesis has been achieved in what is called art criticism. The history of Indian—not Hindu—art criticism is yet to be written. Only when we will have historically assessed and culturally valued these currents and cross-currents shall we have equipped ourselves with a rich body of Indian art criticism. English literature judged by these criteria, to be precise, will emerge as a new branch of scholarship in India. A lowering, if not dissolution, of the boundaries of national literatures, extremely necessary for a greater understanding of the peoples, is all that is desired.

A. M. GHOSE

VINOBA'S LEAD BACK TO "INWARDNESS"

Addressing the London Branch of the Indian Institute of World Culture on October 11th on "My Travels with Vinoba Bhave," Mr. Donald G. Groom gave an illuminating glimpse of the movement of Vinobaji. Himself a worker at the Indian village level for many years, Mr. Groom had felt the need of something to arouse the people from apathy. He had confided to his diary his feeling that the need was for a true religious revivalist, an observation revealing understanding of fundamental Indian values.

Such a revivalist, on the broadest humanitarian lines, is Shri Vinoba Bhave. The appropriateness of such a movement as his taking its rise in India surprises none acquainted with the strength of the spirit of devotion and renunciation in the Indian tradition. Both Gandhiji and Shri Vinoba Bhave "knew that they could build on the willingness to sacrifice that was still considered the height of achievement in religious life."

Vinobaji urges on his workers the value of selfless service and of silence, both sadly under-prized in our competitive and vociferous times. Mr. Groom described Vinobaji's dwelling on the great virtues of truth and gentleness and peace, which needed silence for their actualization in life.

His movement has from first to last been a "giving" one. In numerous villages all the land has been given by the owners to the community. It began with the donation of land but it did not stop there. Vinobaji has pointed out that the giving may equally well be of wealth, knowledge, skill or strength. And who is there so poor that he cannot give, if only his good will and love?

Whether or not Vinobaji's peaceful social revolution proves capable of solving the modern world's complicated economic problems, the spirit it has quickened must rejoice all friends of man's true progress. Mr. Groom interprets that spirit as "a rejection of outwardness and a return to inwardness." He described it as "one that speaks to the deep need of India." Does this differ from the deep need of the whole modern world?

POETRY, PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP

[It is an old problem which **Mr. Peter Malekin** examines; he champions the idea of the right of the individual. Freedom of speech and all other freedoms are essential to human progress; but the Law of Interdependence demands that whenever individual liberty deteriorates into licence a check on the individual be placed. Nature's pattern allows freedom of will to man, but he is always checked by *Karma*, *i.e.*, by his own past doings. Nature demands that the experienced elders check the young minds charged with passion and thus save the cause of spiritual freedom. Every time liberty deteriorates into licence human progress receives a setback.—ED.]

In the recent Hungarian revolution, it has been reported, poetry once more became a political weapon. It was declaimed—and listened to—at street corners, and posted up on hoardings. In spite of the fact that by no means all of it was political, it was nevertheless felt to be appropriate that poetry should thrive when freedom was in the air.

In the past the lampoon and satire were normal productions of personal feelings or enmity. Now they have dwindled to the occasional political satire in the newspapers. Many of the bitter political attacks of the past centuries would no longer be tolerated. The eighteenth century would be a little too brutally outspoken for us; and yet we regard ourselves as the protectors of speech.

"Freedom of speech" is in the Western democracies often regarded as an "inalienable right"; but both these phrases are vague. We do not regard it as an infringement of the freedom of speech to have laws against libel and slander; we must respect the personalities of individuals, but we may in many of the democracies say what we like about the government, our country or world affairs. In ancient Athens the convention was the opposite—say what you like about individuals but don't dare to speak against the Athenian State. The convention is very different again in many parts of the world today: there our conception of the freedom of speech has no weight. In the West itself there are at least two very strong organizations, the Communist Party and the Roman Catholic Church, which believe in, and wherever possible practise, a rigid censorship.

Words are power. To control words is to control one of the sources of power. Unorthodox speech can be stifled; but there is a second degree of control—the propagation of orthodoxy may be enforced. The writer in particular is given well-defined limits within which he is "free" to write. He must conform to certain ideas, certain patterns of thought, sometimes even certain usages of language. The writer must not only refrain from attacking the ruling political or religious ideology; he must also give a

"moral" to his work, make it point explicitly to the truth of the ideology.

Such a censorship of ideas may not even be imposed from without: the writer may feel it his duty to censor his doubts about the creed he has accepted. The result of such a self-censorship may even be great art—*Paradise Lost* is perhaps a case in point. And yet the greatness of art does not come from a concept, nor is the standing of a literary work to be judged by the concepts it contains. It is, as Mr. Eliot has pointed out, perfectly possible to recognize the stature and enjoy the poetry of the *Divine Comedy* without being a Roman Catholic; or for that matter to enjoy Homer without following the Greek religion or the *Mahabharata* without being a Hindu. Brecht may be similarly enjoyed without one's being a Communist or Milton without one's being a Protestant. These things have an imaginative truth which we acknowledge without agreeing with the rational concepts of the works. Equally well there are many works with whose rational concepts we may heartily agree while we find the works themselves mediocre or even downright boring. I find the novels of Mr. Aldous Huxley lively, stimulating and often highly amusing, but they would hardly be called "great"; with their "message," however, I am often in complete agreement.

Is it then possible that to censor a work of art is to apply rational concepts to the irrational? Is censorship the irrational application of reason out of reason's place? And if the truth of art is not the truth of reason, then what truth is it? Should all censorship be abolished?

Those who favour censorship often approach the problem from a different point of view. They start with children. You cannot, runs their argument, expose children to immoral influences; but, since most men are children with big bodies, you ought to protect adults too. Such protection is, of course, for their own good.

There is much to be said for the argument. Its weaknesses are three: first, that men invariably disagree over what they mean by "moral" or "immoral"; second, that the censor has no "moral" right to decide what is moral or immoral for other people; third, that men are not simply overgrown children.

It may be true that all the great religious teachers have agreed on certain basic moral principles—that one should love one's enemy, for instance. It is certainly not true that the great religious traditions agree about how these principles should be put into practice. The problem is further complicated by the modern political creeds, which do not in any way recognize the validity of religious morality; also by the anomaly that many of the religious churches, while professing the principles of their founders, have often

encouraged and acted upon the "moral" principles openly professed by Fascism or Communism.

One of the realms where dispute over right and wrong has often been fiercest is that of sexual morality. The difference in marriage conventions between different places and different ages is quite fantastic. Yet people often feel more strongly on this matter than on any other, and are correspondingly more fanatical in their readiness to blame others out of hand. Many different kinds of art have been attacked for sexual immorality.

Suicide is another subject which is liable, however it may be treated, to arouse the fury of some sections of the community.

All the pleas for censorship assume that those who favour censorship know what is "right." What, in fact, a man means when he says that men are children and must be protected from their folly is that his particular notions of theoretical and practical morality (being, of course, the "right" ones) should be imposed on others and the "errors" of those who disagree with him should be stamped out. Inhuman persecutions have frequently been indulged in on the plea that they were good for humanity.

The fundamental question behind the problem of censorship seems to me to be whether one recognizes or not the freedom of the human will. If one does, then it is not one's task to impose one's ideas on others; the choice of others must be respected even if it seems evil. The function of the State and of human law, in that case, is not to impose a moral code on the members of society, but to keep a balance between the differing moral codes of individuals. Let us take two unpleasant instances to indicate how this would work. If two adult individuals indulge in a homosexual relationship of their own free will, then it is not the State's concern; if one tries to violate the other, however, then it is the State's duty to protect the violated. If a sadist ill-treats a masochist, both of their own free will, then the State is not concerned; if the sadist attempts to ill-treat other members of society against their will, then the State is concerned.

If this general attitude is accepted, then the State's duty becomes triple: it must protect the weak against the violence of the strong; it must protect the young; and it must give the best conditions to its citizens for them to learn to protect themselves. The mental and moral integrity of each individual must be his own concern. If the State tries to protect the weak-willed or the stupid, then human freedom of will is of necessity challenged. In declaring unconstitutional a Michigan law relating to censorship, the American Supreme Court has said that its effect was "to reduce the adult population of Michigan to reading only what is fit for children," and

"it thereby curtails one of the liberties of the individual...that history has attested as the indispensable condition for the maintenance and progress of a free society." Yet similar laws still exist in many places.

But how and from what must the young be protected? Those still in the process of growth have not yet taken charge of their personalities; even those among them who would later be masters of their own decisions cannot be so while still children. They must therefore be protected against the unscrupulous application of emotional stimuli until they are of an age when they have become capable of deciding for themselves whether to submit or not; they would therefore have to be protected against most of the advertisements of the modern world as well as the more obvious things. Their education should aim, not at the inculcation of any particular ideas, but at the strengthening of the rational faculty. The simpler forms of logic should be taught in schools and religious education should be replaced by the presentation of the ideas of the different religious and political systems, each being put forward by a follower of that religion or political system. The speakers would be expected to answer questions on their beliefs. Thus the children would for instance be visited in turn by a Muslim, a Roman Catholic, a Communist, a Buddhist, a Hindu, a democratic politician, etc. Apart from this the children should be made to read the scriptures, not of one religion alone, but of all. In this way their discrimination would be cultivated and they would be less likely to accept some system of thought without a knowledge of the case to be made against it.

Such a training should help to remove the biased and narrow prejudices so common in life. Impractical and cranky? Perhaps—all unorthodox ideas are; but at least in my opinion infinitely preferable to the moral, intellectual and political dangers of censorship. Education is the right answer; there should be for the adult no censorship of any kind.

PETER MALEKIN

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

KRISHNA, THE BELOVED*

It certainly was a happy idea on the part of the editors of the series "Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West" to include a volume on Krishna. Without doubt, this divine personage occupies a dominant place in the lives and thoughts of many millions of devotees, certainly not only those to whom the *Bhagavad-Gita* is the basis of their religious convictions. It is an open question whether, to the devout villagers singing *kirtans* in Bengal or Mira Bai's *bhajans* in western India, the famous *Bhagavad-Gita* is a living conception at all. Krishna as a deity has so many aspects, and some of them seem to go so ill together, that it seems incredible to outsiders that they could all belong to one single god. Still, these seeming contrasts present no difficulties to the faithful at all.

The Krishna literature, both oral and written, is overwhelming and sometimes is rather like a tropical rain forest where trees are covered with creepers and flowering orchids and strange shapes and perfumes almost threaten to overcome the unwary traveller. The author has certainly succeeded in finding a path through the forest, leading his readers straight from the earliest mention of a Krishna in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* to scenes of his loves painted at nineteenth-century courts in secluded Himalayan principalities. He has chosen a fine and representative series of paintings to illustrate the different stages of the journey. Readers in the West and even in India will be grateful for this guidance.

But one should not imagine that Mr. Archer's path has revealed all the beauties, or perhaps even the most important ones. Granting that sex symbolism is undoubtedly prominent in Krishna worship, there is really more than the rather sterile *Nayaka-Nayika* (ideal male and female lovers) convention which inspired most of the later paintings. It was one of the many stifling courtly conventions which so effectively succeeded in killing real art and literature—and music—in India from the middle ages onwards, leaving only versifications according to rules and regulations, hothouse distortions of once living ideals of beauty.

It is most regrettable that the whole school of Krishna poetry, which flourished in Bengal from the days of Chaitanya (late fifteenth century) onwards, and even Chaitanya himself, are not mentioned with so much as one word. Govind Das seems to have wandered in by chance, but where are Purushottam Das, Jnana Das, Ramananda Ray and the other Mahajan poets? It is precisely in that school that the symbolism became sublimated in a search for the supreme, divine love. It was Chaitanya who said that only when the difference between male and female had ceased to exist that divine love could begin to be born. Each of the poems of a *kirtan pala* describes a different aspect of the soul's (Radha's) eternal quest up to the final *Unio Mystica*. It is there and not in the unceasing observation and analysis, however masterly, of sexual impulses and their gratification that the real importance of Krishna worship lies. The author knows it (judging by his quoting a poem by St. John of the Cross) but chooses to ignore it, thereby really distorting the picture and leaving out its most valuable aspect.

**The Loves of Krishna: In Indian Painting and Poetry.* By W. G. ARCHER. (Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West, No. 18. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 208 pp. Coloured Frontispiece+39 Plates. 1957. 30*s*.)

Sometimes the author seems to have been carried away by his eagerness to explain the symbolical meaning of the surrounding objects in the paintings. The moon, on Plate 16, is not waning but a crescent and consequently cannot parallel the tyrant Kansa's impending doom. As a matter of fact, if a symbolical meaning is to be attached, a connection with Krishna himself is more probable, because the white sandalpaste mark on his forehead is often compared to the beauty of the new moon rising above a dark rain cloud.

The description of Plate 33 as a representation of the *Raga Hindol* is puzzling, as it is entirely different from the usual portrayal of a pair swinging in abandonment on a swing slung over the branches of some flowering trees. In this picture Krishna and Radha appear not to be seated on a real swing at all, but on a couch with very solid legs, while Krishna is holding a *vina* on which Radha rests her hand, both leaning comfortably against an enormous pillow. If this is the *Raga Hindol* (there is indeed a suggestion of the couch being suspended), it only indicates how very far the painter has wandered from the spirit and meaning of the *raga*.

An even more glaring instance of a lack of understanding is presented by Plate 34, which purports to be the *Raga Bhairava*. Anything less suited to the austere mood of that *raga* than the love scene depicting Krishna and Radha with a group of attendant girls could hardly be imagined. There are two possibilities, if the portrayal of the *ragas* as we know them in the different *ragamalas* ever had any meaning at all; either there has been a mix-up between pictures and verses, or the court of Hyderabad was completely unaware of what this correspondence between picture and music meant, perhaps on account of the local preponderance of the south Indian school of music, which never developed this emotional aspect of the modal structure. It does not detract from the loveliness of the picture, but its connection with *Bhairava, i.e.*, Shiva in his terrible aspect, is just absurd.

The author's outline of the history of Indian painting is fascinating and valuable. It is not unlikely that, as more data come to light, there will have to be revisions. Evaluations of artistic merit will fluctuate, as they always do. But it is good and most satisfactory to see Indian art represented as something fine in its own right and no less worthy of deep appreciation than the best the West has given.

A. A. BAKE

Reincarnation in the Gathas, the Holy Bible and the Holy Koran. By H. S. SPENCER. (Spiritual Healing Centre, Coimbatore, India. 44 pp. 1957. 75 *naye paise*)

The material of this booklet points to the truth that all great religions have one source. That which should bind the religions is the identity of their teachings. But these eternal verities are obscure for the most part to the people at large. Sectarianism and sacerdotalism create irreligion. Knowledge and free thought create religion.

While quoting the great prophets, the author brings in dubious psychic and mediumistic pronouncements. For instance, many times "St. John the Apostle" is quoted "as speaking through his instrument Mrs. Louie Hill," a modern medium. Why should any thoughtful person visit a medium for proofs of reincarnation? The very existence and teaching of the Prophets gives clear proofs that reincarnation is true.

J.

The Tragic Philosopher: A Study of Friedrich Nietzsche. By F. A. Lea. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 354 pp. Illustrated. 1957. 30*s.*)

"The life of Nietzsche, every biographer has to admit, amounts to little more than the history of his thought." But "since his inward development was as rich in 'fatalities and convulsions' as his outward was destitute of them, it is one of the most dramatic on record."

Mr. Lea's biography succeeds in conveying to the reader the full impact of this statement. Not that he dramatizes in the least. His analysis is a truly scholarly one. It traces carefully and patiently the evolution of Nietzsche's works, the gradual unfolding, the bloom and decay of his genius. This "genetical" approach proves particularly appropriate to the study of a thinker so versatile and frankly self-contradictory as Nietzsche. It indicates the foreshadowing of later ideas and prepares, whenever possible, for subsequent changes. Only by this method is justice done to the much abused concepts of the "Will to Power" and the "Eternal Recurrence" and their changing significance for each stage in the philosopher's development.

Yet the appeal of this scholarly book is far from academic. It is addressed to the general reader and will succeed in fascinating every thinking man and woman. Whether Mr. Lea discusses Nietzsche's interpretation of history as a version of what he calls the "Romantic Myth," whether he presents his scientific thought in the light of modern physics and biology, whether he makes us share the spiritual liberation of "The Joyful Wisdom," or draws parallels with Pascal, Blake, Freud and Marx—he shows a range as unusually wide as that of his hero. But the deeper reason why this book holds our attention lies in the fact that it has sprung from a vital need. It seeks in Nietzsche's works answers to our own problems. Mr. Lea knows, as indeed Nietzsche himself had known, that

> those issues, problems and conflicts that set him so completely apart from his contemporaries were the very ones which weigh upon all of us today, and which we, too, must now either come to terms with or perish. To an extent still unascertainable, his private world was our public one.

The bulk of the author's criticism of Nietzsche is contained in the last chapter, entitled "The Antichrist." It is here that he sees his thought in the light of the idea of a Logos which, like that of Nicolas Berdyaev, is perpetual creation. No less interesting is his conclusion that had Nietzsche been able to view the founders of Christianity otherwise than through the glasses of Schopenhauer, had he been in a position to see them free of the later accretion of Gnosticism, his attitude towards them would have been far from antagonistic; he would, on the contrary, have realized how close he himself was to the real Jesus and the historical Paul. Mr. Lea then goes on to declare that, although and because Nietzsche was unaware of this affinity, he was the first European to re-discover the standpoint of Jesus and Paul, and present it in terms of a world-view as appropriate to the twentieth century as theirs was to the first.

This claim seems to the reviewer more than extravagant. How can the author of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* be proclaimed the bearer of a "gospel," when it is said that "while his later world-view can justly be described as mystical, it cannot be described as religious. His unique combination of mysticism with scepticism precludes us from describing it even as pantheistic"? (The term mysticism itself appears misleading when thus divorced from its religious contents.) Moreover, much as we consider a great deal of Nietzsche's bold and brilliant analysis of traditional morality valid, can we accept his position "beyond good and evil"?

Whatever our attitude to this problem, this is an admirable book. It is a biography Nietzsche himself, one feels, would have been delighted with. For this conscientious and loving study

confronts the reader with the crucial question: What is the living truth of Nietzsche's philosophy for me?

L. S. SALZBERGER-WITTENBERG

The Poetry of Living Japan: An Anthology with an Introduction. By TAKAMICHI NINOMIYA and D. J. ENRIGHT. (The Wisdom of the East Series. John Murray, London. 104 pp. 1957. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

For fifty-three years this unique series has been quietly fulfilling the purpose of its founder-editor and publisher, that is, of interpreting the ideals, ethics and philosophy of the Far East to the West, and of acting as "ambassadors of good-will" between the two hemispheres.

This latest addition has an importance all its own, for the collaborators have "re-created" some of the wisdom and the beauty in the words of twentieth-century Japanese writers; whereas most of the preceding volumes are concerned with the ancient, though ever-enduring, wisdom of the East.

Some of the poets who are here offered in English dress are still writing; all belong to the Japan which resulted from the opening of the country to Western influence. It is the first volume of its kind, for only poems "both discernibly modern and discernibly Japanese" have been selected. The collaboration has been a delightful one, and we may take it that Takamichi Ninomiya has seen to it that the sense has been faithfully rendered, while D. J. Enright is already an established poet in his native language.

Susukida's "In the Heat of the Day," and many another little poem, awaits a composer of genius to set the words to music; but it is to some of the more ambitious and longer poems that many Western readers will return. Not always because these are necessarily finer, but because those who would seek the essential modernity of the Japanese poetry of today would be drawn to study, for example, Kotaro Takamura's "My Poetry"; much as a Japanese reader would doubtless ponder the work of T. S. Eliot rather than the delightful but more traditional poems of Edmund Blunden.

"My poetry is not part of western poetry," affirms the poet and proceeds with both wit and wisdom to point the differences:—

> My poetry is no other than what I am,
> And what I am is no other than a sculptor
> of the far east....
> Western poetry is my dear neighbour,
> But the traffic of my poetry moves on a
> different path....

That is why the Western path-finder is so strongly recommended this little book.

F. SEYMOUR SMITH

The Interplay of East and West: Elements of Contrast and Co-operation. By BARBARA WARD. (Beatty Memorial Lectures, Second Series. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 82 pp. 1957. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

The exchange of a mass of ideas, cultures and races between the two hemispheres has been phenomenal in its continuity, diversity and opulence. Some of the ideas gave birth to stupendous movements, notably in China, India and Japan. Some of the events have made history and have built and demolished in turn empires. East and West once again confront each other, as did the Greeks and the Indians, in a new situation fraught with immense possibilities and incalculable dangers. Most of the Eastern countries have lately emerged into nationhood and have gained new confidence with which they look questingly and hopefully towards a future.

Miss Barbara Ward, in the course of the second of the Beatty Memorial Lectures, has attempted to absorb the new East-West perspective with courage and candour. She boldly surveys the scene during the last five centuries when Asia was completely under Western sway. The largely one-way traffic of Western political, economic and in those days religious ideas was at its heaviest. The reader of this book is swept through a fascinating cavalcade of history, variety of ideological conflicts and complexes, and the grafting of Western institutions and systems on an alien soil.

Miss Ward's lecture is informed with an acute awareness of the fact that never before in the East-West relationship was there a greater danger of erroneous judgment or a greater need for mutual understanding. Words like "aggression," "imperialism," "communism" and "colonialism" can be idly bandied about. Hence, if mankind is to survive, East and West must understand one another and help each other towards prosperity. The author reveals an amazing awareness of the present situation and its explosiveness. Her analysis is incisive, human and honest. This publication is a serious and valuable contribution to East-West understanding and to the future of the human race.

MOHAN KASHYAP

The Tibetan Book of the Dead or The After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering. By W. Y. EVANS-WENTZ. With a Psychological Commentary by C. G. JUNG, Introducing Foreword by LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA, and Foreword by SIR JOHN WOODROFFE. (Oxford University Press, London. lxxxiv+249 pp. 6 Plates+5 Text Illustrations. Third Edition, 1957. 25*s*.)

This book first appeared in 1927. One can admire the various contributors' erudition and sincerity, but the *Bardo Thodol* itself should be approached with the utmost caution. Its Yogic and Tantric ritual is designed to guide the dying person's passage through the post-mortem states to rebirth. Dr. Jung intuitively suggests, as an aid to understanding, that one should read the stages backwards, even though this reversed order does not accord with the ritual's intention. Neither do other religions agree with it. It defines the first stage as "experiencing the radiance of the Clear Light of Reality" which diminishes into less and less happy visions, until horror-creating personifications of the man's evil propensities drive him into the refuge of a new womb. The aspiration to "a Voidness which is the Dharma-Kaya" and the methods for escaping rebirth seem (under the high religious phraseology and dramatic trappings) to indicate an aim the reverse of compassionate Buddhahood.

When one considers that the MS. was obtained from a lama of a Red-Hat Sect, it seems probable that this inverted order is deliberate—like the backward repetition of the Christian Mass, with a reversed end in view.

For the Red-Hat School introduced Tantric Buddhism into Tibet. Tantricism deals with "magical" energies (*Shaktis*) and the dividing line between black and white is very fine. The degradation of Buddho-Lamaism into sorcery forced the reform and founding of the *Gelugpa* (Yellow-Hat) School, with a purified teaching. It is to be deeply deplored, in view of the West's growing interest in finer forces and subjective states, that Orientalists have concentrated on these unreformed Red-Hat doctrines, whose dangerous serpent lurks under an alluring flower.

W.E.W.

The Balance of Truth. By KATIB CHELEBI. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by G. L. LEWIS. (Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West, No. 19. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 160 pp. 1957. 13*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a most interesting work dealing with the aspirations and weaknesses of human nature, written by a scholar who knew well both the sanctity of the ivory tower and the uncertainties of practical life. The author, Mustafa ibn 'Abdallah, known generally as Hajji Kalfa (Khalifa) or Katib Chelebi, who flourished from 1609 to 1657, has set down his thoughts in so forthright a manner that the reader may clearly visualize the shrewd and tolerant man behind the pen, one who, though he smiled indulgently at the minor vices, could sharply criticize the sinner when the occasion demanded. It is an attempt to reconcile some of the discrepancies between the standards of the Muslim faith and the day-to-day behaviour of its adherents; as in all religions we seldom practise what we preach, there is a great gulf between the word and the deed. Hajji Kalfa brings to his essays a sense of humour and a sensible view of affairs: in the fifth one dealing with tobacco, he concludes that on smoking "the best course is not to interfere with anyone in this respect, and that is all there is to it."

Geoffrey Lewis, who has produced the translation for this edition, has also provided a very useful short introduction to the twenty-one essays of Hajji Kalfa in the form of a summary of the author's life and work, the nature and operation of Islamic sacred law, the great schism of Sunnite and Shiite, and the general terminology most likely to be met by the Western reader. Each section of the book is supplied with generous explanatory footnotes.

Apart from the obvious interest of Hajji Kalfa's text from the standpoints of religion and sociology, his preface and conclusion throw valuable light on the state of learning in the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century. Therefore the scholar as well as the layman will consult this book.

H. J. J. WINTER

The Buddha's Explanation of the Universe. By C. P. RANASINGHE (Lanka Bauddha Mandalaya Fund, Ceylon. 414 pp. Illustrated. 1957. Rs. 10.00; 15*s.*)

The author claims that this work gives the gist of "Sariputta's report" of a course of lectures lasting three months delivered by the Buddha on life and the universe, and preserved to this day by the people of Ceylon. It is therefore chiefly Abhidhammic in nature: "Abhidhamma is the systematic study of the whole Universe . . . the Science of the Universe," and apparently the "planned living" it affords human beings can transform them into supermen either here "or in some of the heavenly planets."

This book falls into two parts: The first is Mr. Ranasinghe's interpretation of "the Buddha's explanation of the universe": That it is infinite in every way, or that the sky element (being a continuous phenomenon and therefore immune to the repetitions of birth, existence and death) preserves the "individuality of the units of abstract elements," *i.e.*, of abstract earth, water, fire and air, all of which are subject to constant pulls from the mind which has inanimate units of matter in its hold. Moreover the mind vibrates seventeen times faster than matter, so that, with its vast energy, its beat, as the author reiterates, is about 3,000,000,000,000 more rapid than the duration of a flash of lightning.

The analysis of matter and mind presented here, though sometimes convincing, is vitiated by a tortuous style, by the recurrence of such phrases as "cur-

rents of force," "force of the current," "evolution current," "units of elements," and by occasional but startling glimpses of the obvious and by the total absence of documentary support.

In the second part of the book thirty-two not uninteresting miscellaneous questions and answers, based on the author's broadcasts, are collected. For example, there are short discussions on *kamma,* miracles, memory, *devas,* rebirth and its possible verification, good and evil actions and the omniscience of the Buddha. The presentation here is clear and to the point throughout.

I. B. HORNER

Medusa's Mirror: Studies in German Literature. By AUGUST CLOSS. (The Cresset Press, London. 262 pp. 1957. 30*s.*)

The theme of "Reality and the Poetic Symbol" unifies these essays which reveal the treasures of German literature through many centuries. The symbolism of C. F. Meyers's poem, "*Die sterbende Medusa*" (pp. 38-9), gives poignant appositeness to the title, in the light of recent history.

The pregnant opening chapter, "Substance and Symbol in Poetry," appeared in condensed form in THE ARYAN PATH in August and September 1955. The next chapter deals evocatively with the mediæval *Minnesang,* with its Hispano-Moorish, Platonic and Neo-Platonic affinities. The Austrian and German songs of courtly love echoed down the centuries from Gottfried's *Tristan und Isolt* to Wagner's opera and the *Tristan* of Hannah Closs, to whose memory this book is dedicated. A parallel stream produced in Austria the epics, *Nibelungen* and *Gudrun.*

The chapter on "Goethe and Kierkegaard" inevitably suffers from imbalance, so high does Goethe tower above his Existentialist critic. Goethe, profoundly convinced of "the continuity of life and the oneness of centre and circumference," accepted also "the law of day and night, proclaiming *Stirb und Werde* (Die and be reborn).

Professor Closs considers that rhapsodic verse reached its modern zenith in Friedrich Holderlin (1770-1843) with his tragically short flowering, followed by forty years of madness. "Holderlin brings the message of divine life, triumphant still—around and within us" —"Integral, eternal, glowing Life is all"!

In "Nihilism and Modern German Drama" is traced the fall from human values in nineteenth-century plays.

Other chapters deal discriminatingly with Novalis, with the Austrian Georg Trakl, with Rilke's poetic vision, with Stefan George and his "Third Humanism" and his ideal of noble calmness, with Gerhart Hauptmann, "the last of the Giants," with "German Poetry After 1945" and "Reconciliation," and with Bernt von Heiseler's significant novel *Versöhnung* (1952).

The Prelude, "Intuition and Intellect" and the two Epilogues, discussing trends in current literary criticism and "The Poet and His Age," are admirable. Many will look forward to the planned sequel on Germany's great essayists and prose writers.

A truly valuable and discriminating work.

E. M. HOUGH

Bharatiya Kavita 1953. (Published for the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, by Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi. 698 pp. 1956. Rs. 5.00)

In 1954, the Sahitya Akademi decided to publish annual selections of Indian poetry. *Bharatiya Kavita 1953* is the first volume in this series. It brings together ten "representative"

poems from each of the fourteen Indian languages. The original poem is printed in the Devanagari script and its Hindi translation appears on the opposite page. This arrangement facilitates the proper appreciation of the poems as most of the Indian languages have their roots in Sanskrit. The languages represented in this volume are Assamese, Oriya, Urdu, Kannada, Kashmiri, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Panjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam, Sanskrit and Hindi.

It is not possible for one reviewer to comment on the representative character of all the poems selected for this volume. If this series of publications aims at "bringing out the inner bond that connects the various languages in India," as suggested by Pandit Nehru in his Preface to this anthology, the Sahitya Akademi should devise a more rational method for the selection of poems in future. We congratulate the Akademi and the Government of India for offering this publication at a very low price and thus making it available to all lovers of poetry in India.

SITA RAM JAYASWAL

Three Great Irishmen: Shaw, Yeats, Joyce. By ARLAND USSHER. (A Mentor Book. The New American Library, New York. 127 pp. 1957. $50.00)

Such a book makes painfully evident one of the great needs of a "canon of proportion" with which or against which to evaluate justly and intelligently the ideas and works of men. That there is such a measuring-rod of timeless, universal, archetypal ideas is not generally recognized. By its use none of these three men could be considered truly great although each had ability and talent.

Mr. Ussher, having only his personal opinions to give, offers a striking one in his essay on Joyce:—

> ...in the world which Yeats longs to escape from and Shaw to set to rights, this cosmic scavenger [Joyce] accepts with an almost canine receptivity for all its sounds and smells. The scrap heaps and kitchen-middens of his native city—like the slagpits of the psyche—come to life and dance for him....

Considering their works, of the three Joyce has the least right to be called a genius.

E.P.T.

Sexuality, Love and Immortality. By JOHN P. GRIP. (Philosophical Library, New York. 121 pp. 1956. $3.50)

The title of this book is somewhat misleading; it is not a treatise on sex. It is a discussion of the meaning of life and many of its problems. Holding before us the ideal of the attainment of God-consciousness, the author analyzes various aspects of physical and thought life that must be used as a means to that end. The correct use of will is the main factor, and love is another; but there are others, such as not wasting energy:—

> It is this waste and improper use of energy that is responsible for most, perhaps all the ills that afflict the human race. Ignorance and the weakness and ill health resulting from ignorance spring from abuse and misuse and non-use of energy that, if it were saved and made to work in the proper channels would raise man to a superhuman level. And perhaps behind it all lie fear, moral cowardice, fear of saying "Yes" to life, failure to face reality.

This waste of energy applies in particular to sexual energy which, being greatly in excess of actual requirements, must be diverted into channels which strengthen the soul.

This book is written with rare insight and wisdom, and deserves to be widely read. It could well be used by discussion groups, but would need to be amplified by a knowledge of Indian philosophy to complement the discussion of many points raised.

IRENE R. RAY

A LETTER FROM LONDON

A year ago Britain, in conjunction with France and Israel, launched her ill-fated attack on Egypt, and mankind was brought to the brink of world war. The pattern of world affairs was badly shattered by that invasion of Egypt. As a result of it, fearing that it portended the start of an Anglo-American all-out offensive against Russia, the Russians sent their tanks and army into Hungary to crush ruthlessly what might otherwise have been no more than a vigorous expression of discontent by the Hungarian students.

Britain's main preoccupation during the past year has been to continue to repair the damage that was sustained, politically and economically, by the attack on Egypt. Even today Britain is still not getting the same quantity of oil from the Middle East that she was receiving before that attack. The revival of fear and mistrust between Russia and the West that followed the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion, together with the Russian military measures in Hungary, reversed the trend that had been set in motion at the Geneva "summit" talks towards an easement of the Cold War. The arms drive was intensified. The disarmament talks proved sterile.

The Conservative Party suffered enormous loss of influence and prestige both at home and in the Commonwealth and in the United States. The respect for and confidence in the word of British Conservative statesmen has not been fully restored, and that is probably one of the reasons why, in view of all the circumstantial evidence, the Russian Government convinced itself that a new "imperialist adventure" was being hatched against Syria.

The abortive attack on Egypt, with the universal condemnation it brought, badly shook the self-confidence and traditional aplomb of the Conservative leaders. More important, it drove home the lesson, until then learned intuitively only by Socialist thinkers, that Britain, despite the vast sums she was expending on armaments, could no longer steer an independent course, in the traditional sense, in the protection of her foreign interests.

The greatest concern in British Conservative quarters after what has come to be politely called "Suez" has been the extent to which it has weakened British influence in the United States. Time and again British Tory statesmen, from Sir Winston Churchill downwards, have emphasized the vital importance to the "free world" of the Anglo-American alliance.

The reason for this anxiety in Britain is clear: circumstances could arise in which the United States could take the initiative in relation to the Cold War without consulting Britain or the other members of NATO. This was illustrated quite recently when, at a press conference in New York, Mr. Dulles declared, in connection with the Turkish-Syrian crisis, that, if there was a Syrian attack on Turkey, the United States would not merely come to the aid of the Turks but would also attack the Soviet Union itself. His actual words were that the United States would not respect the integrity of the Soviet Union as a "sanctuary" from which aid was given to the Syrians.

Now no British Foreign Minister today could conceivably get up in the House of Commons (they do not give press conferences on such important matters) and make such a specific statement of what Britain's intentions would be in a set of similar circumstances. Up to 1939 such major pronouncements of where "lines would be drawn," the conditions in which Britain would "act" to repel aggression, came from London. Today they come from Washington.

Since Britain is in a firm and specific alliance, she would have to fulfil her part in the alliance, whether she

agreed that the specific circumstances justified recourse to war or not. This is a big difference from the obligations which America had towards Britain up to 1939. In the two world wars, embarked upon on Britain's initiative, the United States had retained sufficient margin for manœuvring to remain aloof until it suited her purpose to come in. Britain, on the other hand, is in the position of having to take the plunge immediately the United States goes over the brink.

Britain knows and feels this difference, that she does not have the status, the prestige or the resources ever to contemplate an initiative that is not fully approved by the United States. For Britain, the Anglo-American alliance is everything. For the United States, a situation could arise in which, if it suited American interests, the alliance could be sacrificed.

Mr. Bevan showed his appreciation of these possibilities when, much to the regret of his own close supporters and friends, he nailed his colours to the nuclear mast at the Labour Party's annual conference at Brighton. Mr. Bevan is shrewd enough to realize that Britain's possession of nuclear weapons does little, if anything, to strengthen her influence in relation to Russia. Only in conjunction with the United States has the British contribution to the nuclear deterrent any meaning.

As Mr. Emrys Hughes, Labour M.P., pointed out in a letter to *The Manchester Guardian,* Britain in a nuclear war would "be destroyed in about five minutes, or about the time it takes the House of Commons to say its prayers." The Russians, simply because they command in actuality far greater military resources than Britain, are in a position to use the threat of nuclear war against Britain (as they did at the time of "Suez") and, in the event of war, to destroy Britain. Britain does not enjoy, if that is the right word, the same influence in relation to Russia.

Britain's influence in this direction can be exerted only as an appendage to that of the United States. On the other hand, as Mr. Bevan realizes, such is the frame of mind of America today that a British Government's influence on the United States is in exact proportion to its military usefulness to the United States. That is why, having to make the awful choice between committing a Labour Government to the maintaining of the nuclear weapon (so long as there is no agreement to ban it) and unilaterally renouncing it, Mr. Bevan, fully supported by Mr. Gaitskell, committed the Labour Party to the former course.

Mr. Bevan realistically pointed out that if a Labour Government, in a couple of years' time, ordered the cessation of the manufacture of H-bombs, it would at the same time, to be consistent, have to request the United States to withdraw its bomber forces from Britain. The American bomber forces in Britain are equipped to deliver the H-bomb. It would be sheer hypocrisy for Britain to refuse on moral grounds to build the H-bomb, but to loan its territory to the United States for that purpose.

In any case, as Mr. Bevan pointed out, the Americans, if obliged to withdraw from Britain, would very probably concentrate their forces in a country that was not so squeamish—West Germany. In what way, then, would Britain stand to gain by unilaterally renouncing the manufacture of these weapons?

These are the arguments that have been used to maintain Britain, whether under a Labour or a Conservative Government, as a nuclear Power so long as Russia and America refuse to ban the bomb. They underline the great gulf that divides the thinking of progressive opinion in Asia on this question from that of those who can be called progressive in the West. Even as the Labour Party was voting by an overwhelming majority for the retention of nuclear weapons by a Labour Government, so long as there is no universal agreement

on the abolition, the Indian and Japanese Prime Ministers were issuing their moving call to the nuclear Powers to cease the manufacture of these awful weapons.

The worst alternative that could overtake any nation which, having the nuclear weapon, unilaterally chose to renounce its manufacture would be inconsiderable compared with the worst dangers to which it would be exposed if the weapons should ever be used. Neither Mr. Bevan nor any other statesman, however, is prepared to confront the electorate with the alternative. The alternative would be that a country like Britain, if attacked by a Russia bent on military conquest, would have to undergo the same kind of struggle to preserve its freedom and liberty as the Hungarians were faced with a year ago.

The idea that, in the event of Britain being involved in war against Russia without having nuclear weapons at her disposal, she would be exposed to nuclear attack is fantastic. Purely for motives of self-interest, it would be inexpedient for the Russians to bombard the British Isles with atomic weapons.

On the other hand, a defeated and occupied Britain would still have the will, the morale and the tenacity to struggle for independence under foreign occupation, in exactly the same way as the French, the Dutch and the Belgians did in the last war.

In the world as it is, with the nuclear weapons being stockpiled by the Big Powers to the point of bankruptcy, these are practical considerations which have to be discussed. We must all hope, however, that when Mr. Khrushchev asserts, as he did at the Turkish embassy reception in Moscow, that "there isn't going to be any war" and that Russia is building for centuries of peace, he has a glimpse of the future which is not granted to lesser minds groping their way through the realities of the problems as they see them.

SUNDER KABADI

London, 30th October 1957

LEAVES FROM A PARIS DIARY

[**Shri Baldoon Dhingra** gives us glimpses, some pathetic, some encouraging, of the literary world in Paris, and he displays his usual concern with bridge-building between other countries and India.—ED.]

Literary history plays curious pranks. It permits certain writers of high talent to fall into neglect, erects some temporarily into a cult and rescues others from seeming oblivion. Optimists like to believe that, in the long run, justice is accomplished, the unworthy dislodged, the truly great seated among their peers and the neglected recalled to their place in the sun.

Currently, great writers such as Romain Rolland, Roger Martin du Gard and Herman Hesse are little read and perpetuators of tremendous trifles like Colin Wilson in England and Françoise Sagan are exalted. The meteor-like success of the phenomenon Sagan, especially in Paris, is chiefly sociological. Mademoiselle Sagan, the post-existentialist, the bar waif, expresses a contemporary mood, of a particular social set, where people drive fast cars, drink whisky and copulate *ad nauseam*. She writes extremely clearly and pointedly. Some venerable venerists like Maurois have called her a genius; others have styled her Madame Prosper Merimée. It is like comparing a good photograph to a painting of Van Gogh. Mademoiselle Sagan's latest, *"Dans un Mois, dans un An,"* which a television programme an-

nounced, *"Dans une seconde, dans une minute,"* is a study of incredible boredom and ennui. It is a story of people for whom life is one long yawn. There is no depth of feeling because feeling is absent; there is no characterization; and, above all, there is rootlessness. The result is bad literature. Parisians are hysterical about the book because it is by a twenty-two-year-old girl and provides a momentary relief, like an *apéritif,* from the utter boredom of contemporary life. The problem of so much modern life has been often treated as follows: "I am never alone with myself because I am always busy—either working or having fun. Love is a rare phenomenon too. Alienated man does not love. What is praised by love experts is a team relationship between two people whose love is essentially a haven from an otherwise unbearable loneliness, an *égoisme à deux."*

Françoise Sagan's gift may one day be turned to good account. For the time being it is a sad commentary on the literary situation. Prodigies dominate the Parisian scene in one field or another. Minou Drouet, who was introduced by the prodigy-launching publisher Julliard, has now turned cinema actress. Her earlier effusions stirred the literary world; now she attracts the eighth Muse. Poor Minou became a plaything in the hands of clever business craftsmen. The *Journal of Ann Frank,* written by a fifteen-year-old Dutch girl, is a moving human document. It is full of tenderness and pathos. Ann looked on life through the eyes of a sensitive, tender, passionate and profoundly beautiful young soul, and recorded in intimate and spontaneous prose the thoughts it evoked. There are moments when she reminds one of a well-known nineteenth-century poetess. The Journal, turned into a play, is now being played to crowded houses and people are stirred deeply by the terrible tragedy that afflicted her and her family during the war. One critic wondered whether, had she been spared the fate she met during those dreadful years, she would have survived to see a better world. But that is hardly the point. We are all moved to our depths by this play because every word in it is truly felt. And it was never intended for publication. It is one of those rare literary salvages.

It was a piece of good fortune that I met Sylvain Dhomme one morning. M. Dhomme is a well-known drama critic and director of plays. His rendering of my play *Awake Lakshmana* (*Lakshmana s'éveille*) was one of much sensitivity. This was particularly so because a new character, a double, a physical counterpart of the apparition, was introduced. The piece, which tried to dramatize an idea from the *Gita,* was relevant to the occasion—Mahatma Gandhi's eighty-eighth birthday. Gandhiji's life itself was a commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Sylvain Dhomme was pleased to produce the play in Unesco, as this was the first time a play had ever been produced in Unesco House. The play was not confined to clime, space or time. Even the characters were chosen from three continents: Africa, Asia and Europe.

Sylvain Dhomme is a good bridge-builder between East and West. His work ranges over productions of plays as different as Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* and Garcia Lorca's *Yerma.* M. Dhomme's experience in Algiers also qualifies him to understand another culture. He is of Franco-Russian origin. His spirit is, therefore, cosmopolitan and catholic. It is for his sensitive productions of plays by Ionesco and Chekov that he was awarded the prizes for production in Prague and Paris. I trust that my suggestion to send him to India in order to serve as director in one of the Unesco projects undertaken by the new Asian Theatre Centre to be opened in Delhi early next year will be approved. M. Dhomme is anxious to be able to use to the fullest extent the simple resources of the Indian theatre by introducing only essential features of Western technical development. We have discussed many aspects of the problem, and I feel the presence of a sensitive artist like Dhomme would

be a great asset to the new and developing theatre. That he possesses sympathetic understanding is amply proved by his recent production, which received wide acclaim. His contact with India will be further strengthened when he again produces my play at the Cité Universitaire on October 27th when the students celebrate Divali. M. Dhomme will then assemble the varied items and give the *soirée* a sense of unity. The attractions of the evening will be international in character. Other nations will not only be present but will contribute their own festive songs and music.

BALDOON DHINGRA

AMATEUR DRAMA

In England a minority of drama lovers lament the closing down of theatres, which are making way for offices. Cinemas with dwindling audiences, finding former "regulars" deserting them for television, are also closing. The lowest common denominator in the way of programmes is drawing an increasing mass of passive viewers. Yet alongside the bog of passivity can be glimpsed the currents of a fresh running stream, a growing trend of activity in the world of recreation, replacing mere spectator participation. In the "handyman" sphere the "do-it-yourself" vogue threatens to become yet another commercial racket, but it does indicate that people are not content with passivity. In the field of drama the number of flourishing amateur societies is fast increasing, so that one London paper, *The Evening Standard,* makes a regular feature of news about them. In its issue of October 22nd it announced about a dozen shows for the following week alone, given by various amateur Theatre Groups, mostly in London and the Home Counties. Those mentioned were a mere handful of the total. Many produce plays written by club members. Incidentally, there are some 200 amateur cine-clubs in Great Britain.

Serious play-production is also on the increase in schools, and the fame of some producing masters, as at Dulwich College and Harrow, has spread far beyond their own circle. Even in the professional theatre, there are non-profit-making companies carrying on, roving the countryside and small towns.

Drama is also being employed in psychological therapy—in mental hospitals and even in prisons. Recently psychiatric prisoners in Wormwood Scrubbs, London, presented their own production of Christopher Fry's play, *A Sleep of Prisoners,* which deals with prisoners of war temporarily housed in a church. The greater share of the planning, scenery and props was done by the prisoners. Each part was carefully allocated to an appropriate prisoner whose psychological difficulties resembled those of the acted part. How seriously they all took it and the benefit derived was commented upon by a Home Office official who added:—

> The prisoners have no wish to attempt a further play unless another can be found which has the depth and general religious and psychological application of the one performed.
>
> It would seem that the underlying motivation here is most certainly not exhibitionistic. It represents a serious contribution to their own rehabilitation and future development.

Certainly this far wider field of dramatic activity holds a promise for the future.

W.W.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"————————ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

His Highness the Maharaja Sri Jaya Chamarajendra Wadiyar Bahadur, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., LL.D., the Governor of Mysore, opened the new hall of the library of the Indian Institute of World Culture, Bangalore, in his usual gracious manner on Saturday, the 9th of November, 1957. A very attractive programme was opened by a reading from *The Dhammapada,* which contains valuable instructions of the Great Enlightened One. Shrimati Sophia Wadia read Chapter 14 on "The Buddhas of Perfection."

In the address of welcome presented to His Highness a tribute was paid to the valuable service rendered to the State of Mysore by his royal predecessors and himself, and the Maharaja was felicitated on continuing the noble tradition of his House. The fact of his being a keen student of Hindu lore was referred to, as were also his recently published volume, *Dattatreya, The Way and the Goal,* and the international recognition accorded to him as a philosopher. His Highness gave a most interesting and thought-provoking address on *"Avadhuta:* Reason and Reverence"; a full report of this will be published soon.

In declaring the library open His Highness congratulated the Indian Institute of World Culture on its cultural undertaking. It was a great audience to which the Maharaja spoke, and all present highly appreciated the new hall and the Institute's magnificent library of nearly 14,000 volumes. A special word of appreciation must be given to the architect-engineer, Shri T. S. Narayana Rao, B.E., M.I.E., M.I.S.E.

It was an auspicious occasion not only for the Institute but also for the City of Bangalore the Beautiful.

As the United Nations Organization enters its twelfth year, one is reminded of the twelfth year of its predecessor, the League of Nations, which also witnessed an intensive effort to solve the problems of disarmament. Even then war was sufficiently terrible to provoke men of peace to cry halt to the cult of hate and war. The League of Nations could not be blamed for its failure, any more than can the United Nations for the present deadlock, for both could only mirror the attitudes of their component member-Governments. That the United Nations was able to solve a major crisis this year, namely, the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, shows the major role it can play in maintaining world peace. Despite its limitations, the United Nations, as India's Prime Minister said at Delhi on October 24th, is the only hope for peace:—

> True, it has not solved many problems, and has shown weakness in dealing with certain matters such as Kashmir, South Africa and Algeria. But, after all, the U.N. reflects the present world atmosphere and its functioning could become more effective only when member-nations stop accusing each other and turn to ways of constructive co-operation. . . .In its twelve years of existence, the U.N. has averted one or two big wars. There is no doubt about it. I am sure that if the U.N. had not been there, the problems of the world would have been much worse.

Remarking that any criticism of the U.N. should not overlook the fact that it represented independent nations governed by their own policies and approaches, he observed that there was an atmosphere of tension, hatred and hostility in the world and it was no fault of the U.N. if it reflected this atmosphere to some extent. Shri Nehru

hoped, however, that, as people realized their follies and became wiser, the U.N. would become a very effective instrument for achieving world peace.

There is another aspect of the United Nations' effort, that by wearing down differences among nations it can create a common ground towards building up world peace. Because of the terrible weapons forged by the Big Powers any war now would make the last war look like child's play. The recent scientific advancements which have confronted the world with the choice between peace and life on the one hand and war and perhaps annihilation on the other, were ably discussed by President Rajendra Prasad in his United Nations' Day message, in which he pleaded for "some workable understanding" to ensure peaceful use of the latest inventions. He said :—

> With the advance of science the whole perspective of human affairs and international relationship is undergoing a change in a surprising, if not startling manner. Human ingenuity in our age seems to be at its best in harnessing the forces of nature and exploring the mysteries of the universe through science and technology. One can only hope that all the inventions and researches will be used for advancing the welfare of human society. This rapid advance of science has its lesson for us. While welcoming it, we must come to some workable understanding among nations in order to ensure peaceful use of these inventions. If the nations of the world fail to do that, they will be playing dangerously and irresponsibly with the fate of mankind.

Despite the fears and weaknesses of the human mind, there is no need for despair; for Humanity will shed its fears and weaknesses as devotion to peace becomes a consuming passion to be translated into purposeful action through *Panchashila,* the doctrine of peaceful co-existence.

One of the soundest utterances of Prime Minister Nehru, one which, revealing his inner bent of mind, has come as a refreshing breeze to cool the temper of the world, was his statement in Hong Kong on his return from his Japanese tour when he commented on the results of the launching of the artificial earth satellite. Urging the necessity for a newer dimension of thinking, he said :—

> There is obvious need for controlling all these developments but the main thing is, we must first learn how to control ourselves instead of the satellite. If we do not control ourselves something always is going wrong with us or with the person we do not like. In other words, we have arrived at a stage where we have to think about all these matters in somewhat different terms.
>
> ...when these natural resources have been released or are capable of being released which can destroy the world, are we to go on thinking in terms of petty power conflicts in view of these vast forces? It means man is much too small to even think about it.

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his entire life to living up to the age-old precept of controlling one's own self before trying to control others; it is refreshing to see India's Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, presenting the same doctrine once again. Rightly does he deprecate the race for armaments to which the launching of the satellite will shortly lead. He demanded :—

> What does all this mean? It means, I have no doubt, that very soon you will have one, two, three or four more satellite moons from the United States. If one country imagines that it has got a lead in science and technology over another country, the other country takes a jump and takes the lead. So they [the Big Powers] go on like this. It would be a very good thing if countries entered a race in scientific and technological advance if it would be profitable to the entire human race. But if that was tied up with the cold war, tied up with the possibility of the mass destruction of war, then it became a very terrible thing and vitiated invention and discovery.

The dangerous consequences of this latest scientific achievement in the realm of "power politics" have been ably pointed out also by J. B. Priestley, who, in a recent article, observed :—

> Delirious from satellitis, we are now to be rushed faster than ever down the wrong road, leading to nothing that sensible people want. I do not blame the men who enjoy making these fantastic gadgets—though most of them, I think, would equally enjoy making other complicated things—but I do blame our society for giving these types all the money

and authority they need, and for allowing itself to be hypnotized by their fanatical opinions, their shallow philosophy.

"The Russians and Americans," cries one of our morning papers, half dotty with satellitis, "really do understand that the future lies with the scientist and the machine." And I am afraid they do, and that is all they understand. But for my part I cling to the older and safer notion that the future, if there is to be one, lies with the human race.

When men and nations are running madly after the conquest of material power and when there are, in Mr. Priestley's words, "signs of delirium everywhere, and dangerous nonsense in the Press breaking out like a rash," it needs a wise mind and all the efforts it can summon up to stand in the same place and remain sane; but what good will it do one to gain the whole world and lose oneself? Conquest of self is the real conquest and one who is in control of his passions can never be overcome by anything.

Mr. Priestley stresses the need for man to be "brave enough to take a good long look at himself" and urges him to create here on earth where he belongs a good life, instead of desiring to escape from that primary responsibility and run away to other planets, observing:—

He [man] is not ingenious and inventive enough to raise the level of his own being, so he wants to leave one half-wrecked earth behind him to go and ruin another.

Let us get this clear. I do not oppose space travel as such. I do not regard its experts and enthusiasts as dangerous madmen. But I am suspicious of all the boasting, noise and fuss.

I believe it is far more important to have a good life here than to take a bad life somewhere else, to travel farther and farther outward, taking with us our confusion and anxiety, fear and cruelty.

The problem of beggary in India is a gigantic one and only a carefully planned approach can solve it. Therefore the paper on "An Investigation into the Problems of Beggars in India," read recently at the Central Institute of Education in Delhi by Shri N. G. Goray, Director of the Delhi School of Social Work, is a useful document; it analyzes the various factors in society that go to swell the number of beggars. The fact that it is not necessity alone that drives men to this profession, and that many turn to it from choice, makes the solution of the problem still more difficult. It is stated that Delhi has a beggar population of over 3,000 and that the daily income of a beggar is somewhere between 75 *naye paise* and a rupee. The majority of beggars belong to the group of religious mendicants but a good percentage of the rest are able-bodied people who do not want to work, which is in sharp contrast to the desire of some of the physically handicapped to do some kind of work.

Begging has been a traditional profession in India. It is fostered by the natural sympathy of the people expressing itself in the giving of alms, and by the religious appeal of bestowing alms upon religious mendicants. Therefore the public attitude needs first to be changed. Could the public but be educated to "be cruel to be kind," to refuse to give alms to able-bodied beggars, who can but are unwilling to work, they would no longer find the profession a paying one.

Another factor essential for solving the problem is the ensuring of full employment to every able-bodied person in this country. Till such time, begging will continue to be a sad blot on our society and mere legislation outlawing beggary cannot wipe it out. It is sad to learn from the report that many are driven to beggary by sheer poverty.

A substantial number of the beggars came from the marginal groups of casual labourers whose standard of life was not far removed from that of the beggars. But even they felt ashamed of carrying on the new profession near their home towns. Some others had taken to begging because of the death of their parents, of desertion by the supporters of the family or failure to secure employment of any kind.

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